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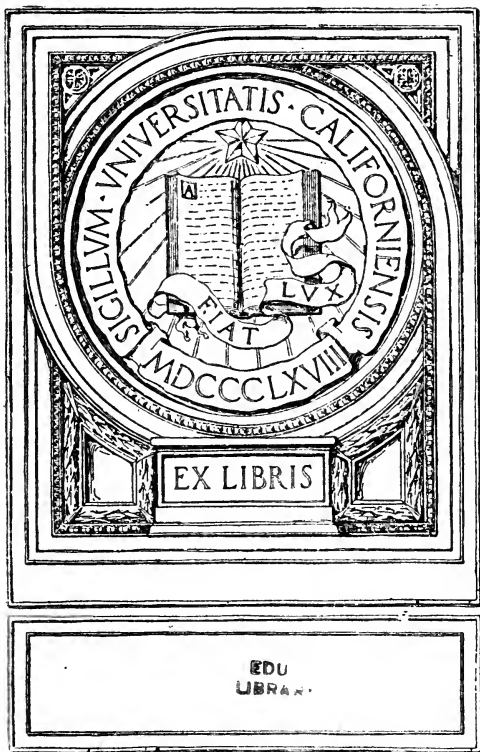


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THE LONG JOURNEY



ELSIE SINGMASTER



By Elsie Singmaster

MARTIN LUTHER. THE STORY OF HIS
LIFE. With frontispiece.

THE LONG JOURNEY. Frontispiece in
color.

EMMELINE. Illustrated.

KATY GAUMER. Illustrated.

GETTYSBURG. Illustrated.

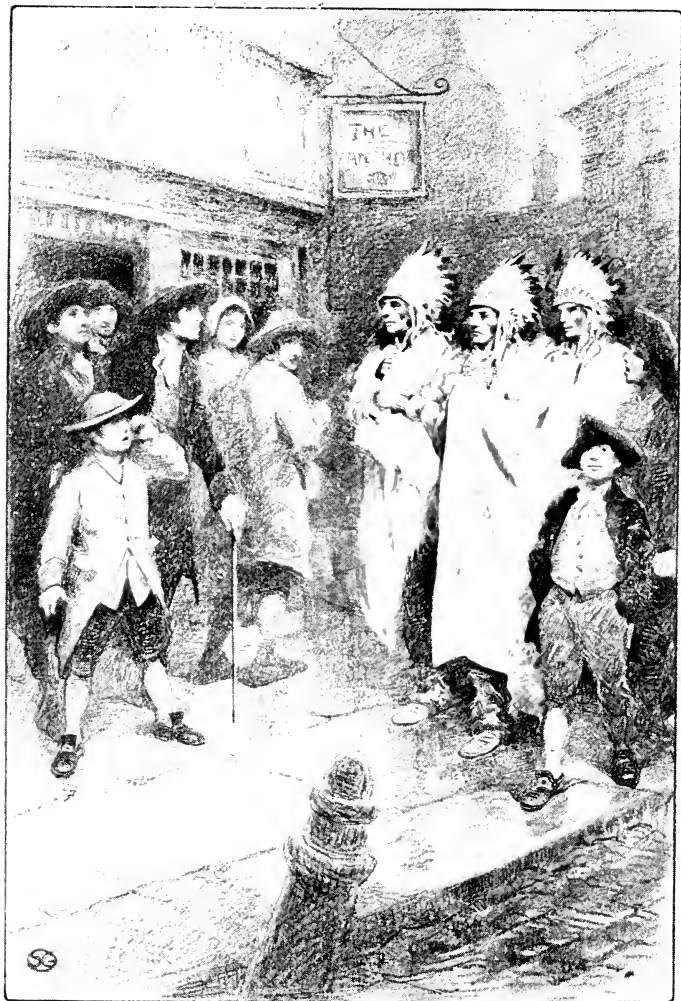
WHEN SARAH WENT TO SCHOOL. Illus-
trated.

WHEN SARAH SAVED THE DAY. Illus-
trated.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

THE LONG JOURNEY

[illegible]



CONRAD RUBBED HIS EYES — HE LOOKED AGAIN (p. 52)

THE LONG JOURNEY

BY
ELSIE SINGMASTER



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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TO
WILLIAM BLACK LEWARS
A DESCENDANT
OF
JOHN CONRAD WEISER
AND HIS SON
CONRAD

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THE LONG JOURNEY

I

THE GROSS ANSPACH COW

ON the evening of the twenty-third of June, Conrad Weiser brought home, as was his custom, the Gross Anspach cow. The fact was, in itself, not remarkable, since it was Conrad's chief duty to take the cow to pasture, to guard her all day long, to lead her from one little patch of green grass to another, to see that she drank from one of the springs on the hillside, and to feed her now and then a little of the precious salt which he carried in his pocket. What made this twenty-third of June remarkable was the fact that this was Conrad's final journey from the pastures of Gross Anspach to Gross Anspach village.

Liesel, the property of Conrad's father, John Conrad, was Gross Anspach's only cow.

War and the occupation of a brutal soldiery had stripped the village of its property, its household goods, its animals, and, alas! of most of its young men. Gross Anspach had hidden itself in woods and in holes in the ground, had lived like animals in dens. Upon the mountainside wolves had devoured children.

What war had left undone, famine and pestilence and fearful cold had completed. The fruit trees had died, the vines were now merely stiffened and rattling stalks, and, though it was June, the earth was bare in many places. There were no young vines to plant, there was no seed to sow, there were no horses to break the soil with the plough.

Sometimes Conrad had company to the hillside pasture. He was thirteen years old, a short, sturdy, blue-eyed boy, much older than his years, as were most of the children in Gross Anspach. Above him in the family were Catrina, who was married and had two little children of her own, then Margareta, Magdalena, and Sabina, and below him were George Frederick, Christopher, Barbara, and

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John Frederick. They all had blue eyes and sturdy frames and they were all, except John Frederick, thin. John Frederick was their darling and the only partaker in the family of the bounty of Liesel. The fact that John Frederick had no mother seemed more terrible than the lack of a mother for any of the other eight children.

When Margareta and Magdalena and Sabina and George Frederick and Christopher and Barbara and John Frederick accompanied Conrad to the hillside, they all started soberly, the older girls knitting as they walked, Christopher and Barbara trotting hand in hand, and John Frederick riding upon Conrad's back. They had little to say — there was little to be said. When the prospect broadened, when they were able to look out over the walls of their own valley across the wide landscape, then spirits were lightened and tongues were loosed. Then they could see other valleys and other hills and the desolation of their own no longer filled their tired eyes. The little children ran about, the older ones, still working busily, sat and talked.

Their speech was German, the soft and beautiful German of the south. Sometimes they spoke in whispers and with fearful glances of the past and its terrors, and of the cruel French. Sometimes the older girls whispered together of romantic dreams which could never come true, of true lovers and a happy home for each. But most of all they talked — amazing to relate — these little Germans of two hundred years ago — of Indians!

About Indians it was Conrad who had the most to say. Conrad was the oldest boy; though so much younger than Margareta and Magdalena, he could read easily while they could not read at all. While Conrad talked, their thoughts traveled out of their poor valley, down the great river, through strange cities to a mighty ship upon which they should sail and sail until they reached a Paradise. Sometimes Conrad walked up and down before them, his hands clasped behind his back, sometimes he lay on the ground with his hands under his head. He talked and talked and let himself be questioned in the

lordly manner which lads assume with their sisters. He carried with him always, buttoned inside his thin clothes, a little book which he knew by heart.

"Is it cold there?" asked Sabina wistfully. Sabina was the last to recover from the fearful winter.

Conrad leafed his little book.

"I will read. 'The climate is everywhere subtle and penetrating. During the winter' — here, Sabina, — 'during the winter the sun has great strength.'"

"I do not know what 'subtle and penetrating' mean. Those great words are beyond me."

"They mean that the climate is good," explained Conrad, who did not know exactly either.

"Will we be hungry?" asked Sabina, still more wistfully.

Conrad could hardly turn the leaves fast enough. His eyes sparkled, his cheeks glowed.

"Now listen, you foolish, frightened Sabina, listen! 'The country produces all kinds of cereals, together with Indian corn of vari-

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ous kinds. Peas, kitchen vegetables, pumpkins, melons, roots, hemp, flax, hops, everything. Peaches and cherries' — Sabina, you have never eaten peaches or cherries, but I have eaten one of each — 'peaches and cherries grow like weeds.' Here we have nothing, nothing! Our grandfather was a magistrate, but we are almost beggars. My father talks to me as he does not talk to you, Margareta and Magdalena and Sabina and —"

Margareta lifted her blue eyes from her knitting and tossed back her yellow braids.

"It is not very long since I spanked you well, Conrad," said she.

At this all the children, even Conrad, smiled. Margareta made a little motion as though she meant to rise and pursue her brother about the high tableland, Conrad a little motion as though he dared her to a chase. But the impulse passed, as all playful impulses passed in this time of distress.

"My father talks to me because I am almost a man," went on Conrad. "He says that if we have another winter like the one which is past we will all die as our mother —"

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Conrad could not complete his sentence. The children did not cry, their hearts only ceased for a moment to beat as Conrad's speech faltered. "He says there will not be enough animals and birds left after that time to establish a new stock. He says that even if the winter is mild, Gross Anspach cannot all live — even we few that are left."

"But I am afraid," said little Sabina.

"Afraid of what?"

"Of the river and the great sea."

"Thousands have sailed down the river and many have crossed the sea, Sabina."

"I am most afraid of these strange red people."

"I am not afraid of them," announced little Christopher. "Not more than I am afraid of Liesel."

Once more Conrad leafed his little book. It was no wonder that it scarcely held together.

"They are not bad people. They fish and hunt and plant crops. They go farther and farther back into the woods as the white people come. I am no more afraid of them than I am of Christopher."

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"But how are we to get there, brother?" asked Magdalena, who spoke least among a family who spoke little.

Conrad shut his book and tied it in its place under his coat.

"That I do not know," said he impatiently. "But we will all see yet the river and the great sea and the deep forests and the red people."

"Old Redebach says —" No sooner had John Frederick began to speak than his lips were covered by the hand of his brother.

"Old Redebach cannot tell the truth. It is not in him. And he is afraid of everything. Ten times he has told me that Liesel would be carried off, that he has had a dream and has seen men watching her. Forty times he has told me that Liesel would die of the cattle plague. There stands Liesel fat and hearty. It is the schoolmaster who is to be believed in this matter. He would start to-morrow if he could. I tell you" — Conrad pointed toward the declining sun — "we are going, we are going, we are going."

Now, on the twenty-third of June, as Con-

rad, alone, guided the obstinate way of Liesel through the dusk, the words of old Redebach came back to him. Liesel had all the trying defects of a spoiled and important character; believing herself to be the Queen of Gross Anspach, she expected her subjects to follow where she led. She proceeded deliberately into all sorts of black and shadowy places from which Conrad did not dare to chase her roughly for fear of affecting the precious store of milk, upon which John Frederick and other Gross Anspach babies depended.

Conrad recalled now, besides the warnings of old Redebach about present dangers, certain fearful things which were printed in his little book. The savages had learned from the whites to be deceitful, they were frequently drunk, they would not be governed, they used their knives and hatchets for hideous purposes. They were enormous creatures, who increased their height by bunches of towering feathers fastened to their top-knots. They stole upon their victims with the quietness of cats, they — was that a

stealthy footstep which Conrad heard now to the right of his path? — they celebrated their triumph with fearful cries — what was that strange sound which he heard to his left?

In spite of himself, Conrad hastened the steps of the unruly Liesel through the twilight.

The Weiser family lived in one of the few houses left in Gross Anspach. It was not large, but to the villagers who had taken refuge after the burning of their dwellings in stables and sheds, it seemed like a palace. From its doorway shone now a faint light, at sight of which Conrad felt ashamed of his fear. He heard the rattle of Margareta's milk pail, and felt against his leg the warm, comfortable body of old Wolf, the Weiser dog.

"You are late," called Margareta, in an excited tone. "I have been watching and watching and the children have been more than once to the bottom of the hill."

"What is the matter?" asked Conrad.

"You will hear in good time," answered Margareta in a patronizing way.

"Where is father?"

"In the house."

"If anything had happened he would tell me first," said Conrad. "I do not believe he has told you anything."

Behind the broad table in the kitchen sat John Conrad. He was the younger Conrad grown old and gray with anxiety and grief. His clothes were whole, but mended with amazing invention. His body was still powerful and the fire of energy flashed from his eyes. As Conrad entered, he raised a clenched fist and brought it down heavily upon the table, which, solid as it was, shook under the impact. A stranger might have thought that he was reproving the little row of children who sat opposite him on a bench and who watched him with a fixed stare. But John Conrad was a kind father; his excitement did not find its source in anger with his children. Nor were the children frightened. Their stare was one of admiration and awe rather than of fright.

Seeing his father thus, Conrad asked no questions, though a dozen trembled on his

lips. He sat quietly down beside the other children and lifted John Frederick to his lap.

When Margareta came in from milking, the family had their supper of black bread and a little weak broth. It was enough to keep life in their bodies, but not very vigorous life. The children scarcely tasted what they ate, so excited were they by their father's appearance, and by the long and solemn prayer with which he prefaced the meal. Presently Elisabeth Albern came for milk for her Eva, Michael Fuhrmann for milk for his Balthasar, and George Reimer, the schoolmaster, for milk for his little sister Salome. For this milk John Conrad took no pay. He was poor, but his neighbors were far poorer; he regarded Liesel neither as the annoying creature which Conrad considered her, nor as the proud princess that she believed herself to be, but as a sacred trust. If it were not for Liesel half of the poor little Gross Anspach babies would not survive the summer. Even John Frederick was beginning to eat the black bread and broth so that younger and

more needy babies might have his share of Liesel's milk.

George Reimer spoke to John Conrad in a way which heightened the children's excitement.

"I will be here," said he.

The children nudged one another. Their father was the leader in what poor little affairs Gross Anspach might still be said to have, and he sometimes assembled his neighbors so that they might encourage and console one another.

Such a meeting was now at hand. The older girls washed the bowls and wooden plates and the cooking-pot and put them on the shelf, and carried a sleepy John Frederick and a protesting Barbara from the kitchen and laid them firmly and tenderly in their corner of the family bedroom. When Conrad nodded to little Christopher that he should follow, the older Weiser bade Christopher stay.

"It is important that all my children who can should remember this night."

Before long the village men and a few of

the women began to assemble. They came quietly, with only the simplest of greetings, but eye meeting eye said wonderful things.

“John Conrad Weiser, you are our leader and friend.”

“Neighbors, you have been my stay in deep affliction.”

A woman with a baby in her arms bade John Conrad look and see how his namesake was growing.

“If it were not for you he would be gone like his father.”

Presently the children, giving up their places on the bench for places on little stools or on the earthen floor, began to whisper to one another and to point. From under the thin and ragged coat of George Reimer, the schoolmaster, projected a flute. George's own flute had been taken from him by the French soldiers, but in a few days a much finer one had been found by the roadside, dropped, probably, because the army could not carry all its own possessions in addition to those which it had stolen. It might be said that Gross Anspach retained two valuable articles,

John Conrad Weiser's cow and George Reimer's flute. Behind his father's back, Conrad pretended to play a tune upon the air. At once the solemn assembly grew a little brighter. Last of all came Catrina and her husband.

At once John Conrad rose to pray. They still had God, these souls who had little else, and upon Him John Conrad called, that He might bless them in *a great endeavor*. At this, in spite of his better knowledge, Conrad opened his eyes and fixed them upon Margareta until she opened hers. Conrad clasped his hands tightly, scarcely able to breathe.

"Friends," — John Conrad had closed his prayer, — "I have asked you to come here so that I might tell you of an important matter. It is not necessary that in beginning what I have to say I should remind you of our miseries and our griefs. You know them as well as I. You know that this life cannot go on; that, presently, unless we do something for ourselves, there will be none of us remaining. Our country is desolate. The soldiers have harried us, the great cold has tortured us,

famine has almost made an end of us. We should not too bitterly sigh and complain on account of what has come upon us. It may be that thus God seeks to lead us to another and a better land.

"I need not tell you, either, what land I have in mind. We have spoken of it, we have seen it in our dreams, we have longed for it with all our souls. There is fertile soil, there is temperate climate, there is, above all, thank God! freedom and peace. There is no war there. There —" John Conrad halted, tried again to speak and failed.

"But we cannot get to that country!" cried the young woman with the baby in her arms.

There was a long pause. Deep breaths were drawn and a great sigh filled the little room.

"The way has been opened," announced John Conrad at last. "I and my family will go to-morrow. Let those who will come with us lift their hands."

But no hands were lifted. The thought of deliverance was paralyzing.

"Word has come that the gracious Queen

of England will send us and our long-suffering brethren to her colonies in the New World. I have had a letter from our old neighbor the magistrate of Oberdorf. He is in London, awaiting the sailing of the ships. He is well cared for; charitable persons exert themselves for the afflicted people. Probably by this time he is already far on his way."

"But *to-morrow*, father!" cried Catrina. "Why start *to-morrow*?"

"As well *to-morrow* as another day," answered John Conrad. "We have few possessions and they are easily gathered together. To those of our friends who will not come with us we could not express our affection and our farewells in a hundred days. We will go on foot to the river and make our way to the lowlands and thence to England. It is a long and perilous journey, but it is not so perilous as to stay. I cannot advise any one what to do. But for all those who come I will care as though they were my own."

"But Liesel!" cried the young woman with the baby in her arms. "We will die without Liesel!"

John Conrad smiled.

"Liesel will stay in Gross Anspach. She will be the perpetual property of the Gross Anspach babies."

George Reimer spoke next. He sat with his arms folded across his breast, within them his precious flute. Tears were in his eyes and in his voice as he said:—

"I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me."

The company broke up without music. There were those who must go home to tell wives or mothers; there were those who wished to talk to John Conrad in private. There was Catrina, with her husband, weeping and distressed, who did not dare to trust her babies to the sea. She must plan with her sisters the bundles which should be packed for each to carry, the food which must be gathered to last as long as possible. To her and her husband John Conrad forgave a large debt, and his kindness and their inability to pay made the parting more heartbreaking. John Conrad still had a little store of German gulden, long hoarded against the coming day.

When all was done and the children were asleep, John Conrad took his oldest son by the hand and led him up the winding street between the ruined houses to the little Lutheran church which had been saved in the great destruction. The moon shone quietly upon it and the little walled-in space behind it. Thither John Conrad led his son, and beside a new-made grave they paused.

“It is not good to dwell on grief when one lives in the world and has still the work of half a lifetime,” said he solemnly. “But there are moments when it is right that we should yield ourselves to our sorrow. The others will come here in the morning, but you and I will then have no time for shedding tears. Your mother looked into the future. She begged me to go when the time came, even though I must leave her here.

“My lad,” — John Conrad laid his arm across the boy’s shoulders, — “there are many things I would say to you. You were, as you know, her darling. But she knew your faults, that you are strong-headed and strong-willed. As you are of all my children the quickest to

learn, so are you the least obedient and steady, the most impatient and impetuous. Your mother prayed for you daily. Will you remember her counsels, lad?"

To the yearning voice Conrad could make no answer. Arm in arm father and son stood for a long time. Then, when the moon had sunk behind the little church, Conrad felt himself led away.

"Now, my son," admonished John Conrad, "weep no more, but set your face forward."

II

DOWN THE RIVER

THE night of the twenty-third of June is a short night at best. When one robs its beginning of four or five hours, there is little darkness left. Bidding his son go to bed, John Conrad spent the night in vigil. In spite of his reminder that this was not a time for grief, he went again to the little church. From thence he climbed through the ruined vineyards to the pastures on the hill where his father and his grandfather had pastured their sheep and cattle. There he stood long and looked about him, his mind traveling back to the happiness of their peaceful lives, spent in sturdy labor and sweetened by the honor which they had had among their fellows. Here were the roots of his own life, deep in the soil — would God that he could stay where he had been born! He was no longer young, responsibility and adversity had made him old. Those rosy stories of the new land — might

they not be as other travelers' tales, concealing a reality worse than this fearful present of hunger and fear? Five hundred miles of river, three thousand miles of sea, and then an unsettled country! The same shapes of fear which had fascinated and disturbed young Conrad seemed now to await his father behind every tree and bush.

Suddenly John Conrad heard a soft sound on the summer wind. George Reimer, as restless as himself, was somewhere about with his dear flute. John Conrad bent his ear to the direction from which the sound came. It was a German hymn, "A Mighty Stronghold is Our God." John Conrad lifted his head and with it his heart. George Reimer would be with them and George Reimer's flute. Returning to his house, John Conrad lay down for a little sleep before dawn.

But George Reimer did not go to the new country. Upon the indescribable confusion of the Weiser house the next morning, he came smiling.

Into sheets and coverlets the Weisers had tied all their movable possessions, the various

articles making curious knobs and projections on the great bundles. The family spinning-wheel must go — surely no article was more necessary! This Conrad was to carry on his back. The few cooking-pots which remained — these must be taken, though all else were left behind. Wardrobes were small, sheets were few, pillows did not exist. The feather beds could not be carried — these were given to the neighbors.

About hovered all Gross Anspach. Each person had brought a little gift, a tiny trinket saved from the pillaging of the hamlet, a little bouquet of the few garden flowers which had survived the cruel winter, a loaf of bread or a package of dried beans for soup. Catrina, a baby on each arm, wept loudly. Each baby had to be embraced many times by its departing relatives and each departing relative had to be embraced by all the village. Under foot, six tiny kittens risked their lives. Old Redebach, tottering feebly about, quoted warning passages of Scripture: —

“As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.”

On the doorstep sat Wolf, his solemn eyes watching the scene in amazement. Everywhere was confusion, everywhere was noise.

For a few moments George Reimer watched quietly.

"Neighbors!" cried he. "If you cannot help these friends, stand back! Here, Conrad, I will tie that bundle. Here, John Frederick, I am to be your horse as far as the river; see that you behave, or I will run away. Sabina, I will keep your kittens if I have to catch the mice for them myself."

With one accord the Weisers turned upon him.

"You are going with us, surely!"

"Only to the river." His eyes sought those of John Conrad. "I cannot go farther. My little sisters are too young, my father too feeble, my mother is sick — I can neither take them nor leave them alone."

"God will reward you," said John Conrad. "But it is a sore loss to us."

In the end no one went beyond the river. From weeping Gross Anspach the Weisers and a dozen accompanying friends separated

themselves at seven o'clock, the Weisers carrying nothing, the burdens on the shoulders of their neighbors. At the heels of the procession walked Wolf. At the summit of the first hill all looked back, save Conrad. The little village lay smiling in the sun; to the pilgrims it seemed like Heaven.

"I cannot go," cried Magdalena.

"Oh, father, let us stay," begged Margareta.

Before John Conrad could answer, a cheerful sound restored the courage of the pilgrims and George Reimer's gay "Susy, dear Susy" set their feet moving.

At the village of Oberdorf there was a halt, while greetings were exchanged, explanations made, and messages written down for friends already in America. Among those to whom greetings were sent was the magistrate who must be by this time safely across the sea.

Here the Gross Anspachers, except the schoolmaster, turned back and the Weisers shouldered their own bundles. It became clear now that there were more bundles than persons and the fact occasioned much laughter and readjustment.

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At night the Weisers slept by the wayside. The fare on the boat would draw a large sum from John Conrad's store and not a penny could be spent for lodging. Lulled by Reimer's flute, they slept comfortably, and, roused by the same music, were off soon after daylight.

At the river came the most difficult of partings. Here George Reimer played a last lullaby and a final reveillé. A river boat, the Elspeth, had anchored near by for the night and upon it the family took passage. The goods were carried aboard and piled in the center of the deck and John Conrad and his eight children followed. At once came a protest from the captain. Old Wolf could not go, and Conrad was commanded to lead him from the boat. Conrad forgot that he was thirteen years old, forgot that he was the man of the family next to his father, forgot his boasted superiority to Margareta and Magdalena and the rest, and threw his arms round the old dog's neck.

"I cannot leave you! I cannot leave you!"

Then he felt himself lifted up and put aboard the gangplank.

"There, Conrad, there! I will take care of him. I have given your father something for you. Show yourself brave, dear lad!"

Stumbling, Conrad boarded the boat. He saw the schoolmaster wave his hand, he saw the green shores slip away, he heard his father's voice.

"Your teacher gave me this for you, Conrad."

"Oh, father!" cried Conrad.

In his hand lay the schoolmaster's flute.

"He said you were to practice diligently and to remember him."

The message made Conrad weep the more. He threw himself down on the pile of household goods and hid his face.

When he looked up his father sat beside him. In his hand were two books. He looked at his son anxiously.

"Conrad, we are going among strange people. The first are the Hollanders, with whom we can make ourselves understood. But of English we know nothing. Now we will learn as well as we can, I and you. The schoolmaster gave me an English Bible, in it

we will study daily, comparing it with our own."

"What will we do about the language of the savages?" asked Conrad, drying his tears. "How will we make ourselves understood by them?"

"There will be time enough for that. It is probable that they compel them to learn English. The savages are a long way off."

For a few days John Conrad and his son studied diligently. There was little else to do in the long hours which glided as quietly by as the stream. The country about them was unbroken and flat; here there went on a simple life like their own. Everywhere were to be seen in the brown fields and the dead vineyards the ravages of the fearful winter.

In return for a little help about the boat, the helmsman, who had served on English ships, did his best to interpret the hardest words for the students. To the surly captain they dared not speak. Once the price for the journey was paid into his hand, he seemed to resent even the sight of his passengers. Frequently he was not sober, and then the helms-

man helped the Weisers to keep out of his way. Unlike the rest of his race, he could not endure the sound of music and Conrad and his flute were objects of special dislike. More than once he threatened to throw both into the river.

When the boat stopped at the city of Speyer for a day and night, studying and flute-practicing stopped entirely and, urged by the friendly helmsman, the Weisers went on shore. Now for the first time the children saw a large town; with eager expectation they stepped on the wharf. But here, too, was ruin and desolation. The great buildings, burned by the enemy who had devastated their own village, had not been restored; the cathedral which towered above the ruins was itself but a hollow shell. When they reached the next large town of Mannheim, they did not leave the boat. With increasing longing they looked forward across the ocean to the Paradise where the enemy had not been.

Daily they were joined by other pilgrims who like themselves looked forward with

aching eyes to the distant country. The newcomers had each his own story of persecution and famine, of cold and misery. With them John Conrad talked, gathering from them all the information which they had about the new country, comforting them as best he could, and reading to them from Conrad's little book. To the directions they listened earnestly, hearing over and over again that they must be patient, quick to hear and slow to speak, that they must be diligent and thrifty. About the dangers of the sea they talked a great deal and were relieved to hear that a journey on an inland river was valuable as preparation for a journey on the ocean. The little book advised also that those who were about to take a journey by sea should practice on a swing.

Each day the captain was less and less able to navigate the ship. Finally the helmsman took command, and while the captain lay in a stupor, Conrad continued the forbidden flute-playing. Growing careless, he was caught, and the captain, who could reach neither Conrad nor the flute, kicked the

family spinning-wheel into the river. The loss was serious and it taught a bitter lesson.

It was the twenty-fourth of June when the travelers left Gross Anspach; a month later they were still far from the mouth of the river. Each day passengers clamored on the banks, each day the number of ships in the river increased, slow packet boats which did not go above Cologne or Mainz, and faster boats which passed the heavily laden Elspeth like birds. The river left the broad meadows for a narrow gorge with precipitous banks upon which stood imposing castles. At sight of the castles the children were overcome with awe.

"There is Bingen, and its mouse tower, children," said John Conrad.

"Not where the bishop was eaten!" cried Sabina.

"Yes; and about here the treasure of the Niebelungen is buried."

"If we could only find it!" sighed Conrad.

"And there" — the helmsman pointed to ruined walls upon the cliff side — "there a brave trumpeter defended his master's life.

While his master and others escaped, he blew bravely upon the walls to frighten the enemy, and when they entered, there was no one left to kill but him."

The watching of Barbara and John Frederick in their trotting about the crowded ship grew to be more and more of a task. The first person who was pushed overboard was made much of, and the man who rescued him was considered a hero. When many had fallen overboard and had been rescued the passengers scarcely turned their heads.

As day after day passed and August drew near its close, John Conrad became more and more anxious.

"It is time we were sailing from England," said he uneasily to Conrad. "The journey has taken long, food has been higher than I thought, and we have had to pay tariff a dozen times."

Again and again he took from his pocket the letter of the magistrate of Oberdorf. Of the chief of his fears he said nothing to Conrad. The good Queen of England had offered transportation to the distressed Germans;

but had she realized, had any one anticipated that so vast a throng would take her at her word? The river captains told of weeks and weeks of such crowding of the lower river. Would there be ships enough to carry them all to the New World? Would the Queen provide for them until they could sail?

Presently rumors of trouble increased John Conrad's fears. A passing boat declared that the Germans were forbidden to enter Rotterdam, the lowland city at which they would have to take ship for England. The congestion had become serious. The citizens of Rotterdam announced that their patience and their resources were exhausted; the Germans could no longer wait there for English boats; they must return whence they had come.

At this announcement there was a loud outcry. Like the Weisers, the other pilgrims had sold or had given away everything except the property they carried with them; if they returned now, it would be to greater misery than that which they had left. Go on they must. John Conrad reminded them of the

Lord in whom they trusted. The Queen had promised and England was rich in resources. The Queen's charity was not entirely disinterested; she expected the Germans to people her new colonies. Nor did John Conrad believe that the Hollanders would see them starve on the way to England. But even as he argued with himself, his heart misgave him. He had seen persons starve, he had seen men and women and children struck down by the swords of brutal soldiers. There was nothing in the world, he believed, too terrible for heartless men to do.

As they drew nearer to Rotterdam, the anxiety of the helmsman was plain to be seen.

"I pay no attention to what passers-by say," he told John Conrad. "But if you see any long, narrow boats, with the flag of Holland flying, then it will be time to be frightened. They will have the power to make us turn back."

Each hour the rate of travel became slower and slower. There was now no current whatever, and for many days the wind did not

blow. Finally, when, at nightfall, the Elspeth came into the harbor, John Conrad breathed a deep sigh of relief. In the morning the travelers saw next them at the wharf one of the long boats which the helmsman had described, and heard that it was to start in an hour to warn all the pilgrims to return to their homes.

The passengers of the Elspeth were not allowed to enter the city, but were bidden to wait on the wharf for English ships. Here their quarters were almost as restricted as they had been on shipboard. In prompt contradiction of the statement that their patience and their supplies were exhausted, the kind Hollanders brought food to the guests who had thrust themselves upon them.

Now the helmsman came to bid his friends good-bye. John Conrad gave him many blessings and the children cried bitterly and embraced him.

"If he were only going with us, what fine times we should have on the sea!" said Conrad.

"He seems like our last friend," mourned Margareta. "Everything before us is strange."

"We thought George Reimer was our last friend," said John Conrad. "Perhaps we shall find other friends as good."

For four days, the Germans watched for a ship. When at last two English vessels came into the harbor and they were taken aboard, the Weisers had little food and less money. When John Conrad heard that no passage was to be charged, he breathed another sigh of relief.

"The good Queen will keep her promises," said he to his children. "The worst of our troubles are over."

But within an hour it seemed that the worst of their troubles had only begun. The channel crossing was rough. From their fellow travelers there was rising already a cry, which was to grow louder and louder as the weeks and months went by — "Would that we had suffered those miseries which we knew rather than tempt those which we did not know!"

When the ship entered the smooth waters of the Thames River, the Germans began to smile once more. About them were green fields. They saw pleasant villages and broad

stretches of cultivated land and deer browsing under mighty trees.

"If we might only stay here!" they sighed.

John Conrad shook his head.

"Here we should not find rest."

Once more the Germans disembarked, wondering whether their stay on shore would be long enough for a closer view of the fine churches and palaces of London. Of so large a city as this even John Conrad had never dreamed.

"Shall we see the Queen?" asked Sabina in a whisper of her father.

John Conrad smiled.

"We might see her riding in her chariot."

Then John Conrad grew sober. As they stood crowded together upon the quay some young lads shouted at them roughly. The ears which expected only kindness were shocked.

"They say we are taking the bread from their mouths," repeated Conrad. "They call us 'rascally' Germans."

"There are rude folk everywhere," said John Conrad.

He directed the children to take their

bundles and follow a man who seemed to have authority to conduct them to some place in which they were to spend the night.

The way thither proved to be long. Again and again it was necessary to stop to rest or to give time for the short legs of the little children to catch up. Again and again the heavy burdens were shifted about. They traveled into the open country — a strange stopping place for those who were so soon to continue their journey! They passed many men and women who looked at them curiously. Presently they heard their own German speech.

“We will have to wait awhile, probably, for ships,” said John Conrad to his son. “Of course we could not expect to go on at once. We —”

John Conrad stopped short and let his bundle slip to the ground. They had come out upon a great space, which a few months before had been an open heath. Now, as far as the eye could reach, stretched long lines of tents. It was no temporary lodging, for here and there small frame store buildings had

been erected and there were long-used, dusty paths between the tents. Men and women and children were going about, meals were being prepared, there was everywhere the sound of voices. John Conrad stood still in amazement.

“What is this?” he asked.

A single sharp voice answered from the doorway of a sutler’s shop.

“We are Germans, lured hither by promise of passage to America. Here we wait. Here we have waited for months. Have you come, oh, fool, to wait also?”

It was not the rudeness of the answer which startled John Conrad, nor the discouraging news which it announced, but the voice of the speaker. For the speaker was none other than his friend the magistrate of Oberdorf, supposed to be by now upon the high seas or in the new country.

III

BLACKHEATH

FOR a long moment Heinrich Albrecht, the magistrate of Oberdorf, and John Conrad Weiser, his friend, looked at each other. John Conrad was the first to speak, in a voice trembling with amazement and alarm.

“Have you returned, Heinrich?”

The magistrate burst into a loud laugh. He was a tall, thin man, of a type to whom inaction is misery.

“I have not been away. Here” — he waved his hand with a wide motion over Blackheath — “here we lie, idle pensioners. Here we have been since May, ever encouraged, ever deluded. Here idleness and evil customs are corrupting our youth. Here we are dying.”

Now the full meaning of the crowded Rhine and the warning of the Hollanders burst upon John Conrad. He looked at his

children, at the young girls, at the little boys, and finally at plump, smiling John Frederick. He thrust his hand into his almost empty pocket, thinking of the long journey back to Gross Anspach for which he had no money. He thought of his high hopes of liberty and peace and independence. He covered his face with his hands so that his children might not see his tears.

"I am here, father!" cried Conrad. "I am strong! I can work!"

"They feed us," conceded the magistrate of Oberdorf. "And they have given us some clothing and these tents. But cold weather will come and we shall die."

"Cold weather! We should be in the new country by cold weather! You yourself wrote that you were about to sail, that you would sail on the next day. There!" John Conrad drew from his bosom the tattered letter. "I have stayed my soul upon it! I have set out on this journey upon faith in it!"

"I thought we should start. I was certain we should start. They say there are no ships.

They have begun to send some of us to Ireland."

John Conrad shook his head.

"This whole land is sick. Across the ocean only there is peace."

"I can get a tent for you beside mine," offered Albrecht. "I have a little influence with those in authority."

Once more the Weisers shouldered their bundles. They crossed the wide camp, greeted pleasantly here and there, but for the most part stared at silently and contemptuously. Finally the magistrate acknowledged grudgingly that the English people had been liberal and kind.

"But they are growing tired. The common people say we are taking the bread from their mouths."

The farther the Weisers proceeded through the city of tents, the more astonished they became.

"The poor Germans have washed like the waves of the sea upon these shores," said Albrecht.

John Conrad shook his head in answer,

having no more words with which to express his astonishment.

The Weisers made themselves as comfortable as possible in the tent assigned them. They unpacked the bundles which they had expected to unpack only in the new country, they received a portion of the generous supply of food which was given out each morning and evening, and then, like the thousands of their fellow countrymen, they waited, now hopefully, now almost in despair, for some change in their condition.

But no sign of change appeared. Day after day John Conrad and the magistrate and the friends whom they made among the more intelligent and thoughtful of the pilgrims met and talked and looked toward the Blackheath Road for some messenger from the Queen. The young people made acquaintance; the children played games and ran races up and down the streets of the city of tents. Sometimes Conrad listened to his elders and sometimes he played his flute for the children.

Suddenly the weather changed. The outdoor life which had been pleasant became

more and more difficult to bear. The nights grew cold; the Germans shivered in their poor clothes. Now, also, another and a more serious danger threatened them.

The cooking was done over open fires, and the Weisers went daily into a forest a few miles away to gather sticks for their contribution to the one nearest to them. One day a young Englishman, with an evil face, spoke roughly to Margareta, who cowered back. He went nearer to her and she screamed in terror. For an instant Conrad watched stupidly, then, suddenly, his heart seemed to expand. He was, as his father had said, strong-headed and strong-willed.

"Let her be!" he shouted.

The stranger laughed, and approached nearer still. They could not understand what he said, nor did he have opportunity to continue what he had begun to say. Before his hand touched the arm of Margareta, he found himself upon the ground. Conrad was not tall, but he had strong muscles; now from his safe position on the chest of the enemy he was able to dictate terms of peace.

"You get up and run as fast as you can down the road," he shouted. "George Frederick, give me that big stick."

Fortunately the Englishman had no friends at hand. He looked about wildly, first at the Weisers, then toward the camp, and promptly did as he was bid. As he went, he shouted a threat.

"Your whole camp is to be wiped out," he yelled from a safe distance. "Wait and you will see!"

The hearts of the Germans, growing daily more alarmed, were no more disturbed, meanwhile, than were the hearts of Queen Anne and her ministers. While the unexpected thousands lay upon Blackheath, minister consulted with minister, boards of trade met to discuss plans and to give them up, and to discuss other plans and to adjourn and to meet again. It was true that Queen Anne desired to settle her colony of New York, true that the news of her desire had been spread abroad. But she had not anticipated this great migration, like the locusts of Egypt for numbers! Ships were lacking to

transport them; suitable asylums were lacking and the Germans themselves, fleeing like helpless children, were not able to take care of themselves.

Scores of wise and foolish suggestions were offered. The Germans were to be sent to distant parishes, together with a bounty for each one. But the parishes did not welcome them; those who were sent returned, poorer, weaker, more helpless than before. There were hundreds of good workmen among them, but even the English workman could scarcely earn his bread. Let them go to Ireland, let them go to Wales, let them return to Germany.

And still, while the English talked, the Germans came. Finally, Her Majesty's Council, meeting almost daily, reached a conclusion and orders were given for the assembling of ships. Action was hastened by an extraordinary incident in which Conrad and his father had a part.

The heavy frosts had begun and there was not an hour when the Germans did not ache with the cold. The quantity of food had

become smaller, the quality poorer than at first. But worse than cold or hunger was the danger from the rising resentment of the Londoners, who demanded that this great mass of foreigners be removed.

Conrad, left to himself, with little to do, roamed about the city, staring at its marvels, at strange London Bridge, crowded with shops and houses which hung over the water, at mighty Saint Paul's Cathedral, lifting its round dome, still beautifully white and clean, far above the gabled city roofs, at the other new churches built since the great fire, and at the soaring monument which commemorated the fire. He even looked with awe and horror at the sad and terrible spot where had been buried, in a deep pit, the victims of the great plague.

Conrad's journeys were not always comfortable. English lads taunted him, gayly dressed young men ordered him out of their path, the bearers of sedan chairs thrust him rudely against the house walls. But still he walked about, watching and listening.

Presently he heard terrifying threats. The

Londoners determined to wait no longer to wreak their vengeance upon Blackheath. Conrad hurried down the long road to make report to his father.

"They mean to attack us with knives, father. They declare they will have no mercy upon us!"

"They would not dare," answered John Conrad. "We are under the protection of the Queen."

Nevertheless, John Conrad called together his friends, and together they drew up a humble petition, praying that the English people continue to look kindly upon them and to bestow bounty upon them.

But the petition availed nothing. That very night, Conrad, lying in his corner of the tent near the edge of the camp, heard the sound of rough voices and heavy steps. Springing up, he looked out the door. On the heath a large company had gathered, carrying knives and sickles which gleamed in the moonlight. With a shout Conrad roused his family, whose cries in turn roused the sleepers in the neighboring tents. The attacking

party was defeated, not so much by the resistance of the Germans, few of whom had arms, as by a warning that the soldiers were coming from London. The Germans were not seriously hurt, but the event was ominous.

Still the days grew shorter, and the dark nights longer, and the air colder. Hundreds gathered round the fires, and among them John Conrad counseled further patience and continued courage. Frequently he read to them from Conrad's little book, at whose directions for life on the ocean and in the new land there were now bitter smiles and long sighs. They had ceased to think of the new country with its rich soil, its mild climate, and its strange, interesting aborigines, except to envy the Indian his indifference to the comforts of civilization.

Upon the day of the first snow, Conrad went early into the city. He had earned a penny a few days before by carrying some bales from a ship to a warehouse, and he hoped to earn more.

Until noon he walked about the streets.

Again and again he was cursed and threatened. The Londoners had not finished with the Germans in spite of their temporary defeat. At noon he ate the piece of black bread which he had put into his pocket, and then went into a cold church to rest. Presently he fell asleep, and when he woke late in the afternoon the church was almost dark. He was miles away from Blackheath and he must set out promptly or the dangers of the way would be doubled. The week before he had been caught in a fog and had spent the night inside a garden gate on the ground.

Leaving the church, he hurried on as fast as he could. It seemed to him that another fog was rapidly gathering over the city. His long walks and the insufficient food had made him weak, but it was better to start on the homeward journey than to linger. He might fall into evil hands and never see his father or brothers or sisters again. The words of old Redebach in far-away Gross Anspach came back to him as he stepped out from the church door into an open square, — *“As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wan-*

dereth from his place." Perhaps old Redebach was right!

In the square, sedan chairs moved about, link boys waved their torches and shouted, rough men jostled him. Presently his tears gathered and began to fall. He lowered his head and plodded on down the street, little dreaming that before him waited one of the strangest encounters, not only in his life, but in the strange history of the world.

Too tired and despairing to remember that traveling with bent head is unsafe, struggling to keep back his tears, he ceased suddenly to feel anything. He came full force against one of the new lamp-posts recently set up, and was thrown backwards.

When he came to himself, he heard but one sound, that of cruel laughter. The amusement of the onlookers was the last drop in poor Conrad's cup of grief. As he staggered to his feet, he said to himself that he wished that the lamp-post had brought him to that death which was approaching for him and his fellow countrymen.

When the dizziness following his fall had

passed and he was ready to start on once more, he observed that the steps of the passers-by were unusually hurried and that all led in the same direction. He looked back to see the object toward which they were hastening. At the sight which met his eyes he gave a startled cry. He was dreaming or he had gone mad.

This was England and London, this was the heart of the largest city in the world. America, the longed-for, with its great forests and its mighty hunters, lay far across the sea three thousand miles away. But through the London fog, surrounded by a great crowd above whom they towered, there came toward Conrad four giant creatures, with bronze-colored skins, with deer-hide shoes, with headdresses of waving feathers, and with scarlet blankets. Conrad rubbed his eyes; he looked again. They came nearer and nearer, they seemed more and more majestic and terrible.

Then, suddenly, they vanished, as though the earth had swallowed them. They could not have entered a house since there were no

dwelling-houses here, and the shops were closed. Risking a rebuff as cruel as that from the lamp-post, Conrad grasped the arm of the man nearest him and poured out a dozen excited questions.

"These are Indians from the wilds of America," answered the stranger.

"Why are they here? What does it mean? Could I speak to them? Where did they go?"

The stranger's patience was soon exhausted. After he had explained that the savages had gone into the theater, he left Conrad to address his questions to the empty air.

For a moment Conrad stared at the spot from which the Indians had vanished. If he only had money to pay his way into the theater also! But he was penniless. The next best thing was to tell his father, as soon as possible, of this incredible experience. Running heavily, he crossed London Bridge and started out upon the Blackheath Road, saying over and over to himself, "The Indians are here! The Indians are here!"

So tired was he and so much confused by

the strange sight which he had seen that it was many hours before he reached his father's tent. He imagined that the long journey had been made and that he was already in the forests of the new country. At last an acquaintance, meeting him at the edge of the camp, led him to John Conrad.

"Here is your boy. He was about to walk straight into a fire."

Fed and warmed, Conrad could only repeat over and over the magic words, "The Indians are here!" His father thought he was delirious; the children cried. For a long time after he had fallen into the heavy sleep of exhaustion, his sisters watched him.

At dawn, when he woke, he found himself stiff and sore and inexpressibly tired. But his head was clear, and slowly the events of the day before came back to him. The Indians were real; to-day he would find them. If they had come from America there would be a way to return. He would beg them on his knees to take him and his family with them. Perhaps they had come in their own ships.

Slipping from between his sleeping brothers,

he lifted the flap of the tent and stepped out into the cold morning air. He could not wait for the family to rise; he would take his share of black bread and be gone.

Then, again, Conrad cried out. Last night he had beheld the strangers through the medium of a thickening mist and with eyes confused by his fall. Now he saw them clearly in the bright morning light, here upon Blackheath before his father's tent! The eagle feathers waved above their heads; their scarlet mantles wrapped them round; they stole quietly about on moccasined feet.

For a long moment the Indians looked at Conrad and Conrad looked back at them. It was as though they measured one another through an eternity, the tall savages from across three thousand miles of sea and the little lad from Gross Anspach. The lad's heart throbbed with awe and wonder. What the savages thought it was difficult to say. They made to one another strange guttural sounds which evidently served for speech. It seemed to Conrad that they were about to turn away. It was as though a heavenly visi-

tor had descended only to depart. Conrad ran forward and grasped the hand of one of the mighty creatures.

"Oh, take us with you, father and Margareta and Magdalena and the others and me! Take us with you! We will work and we will learn to hunt. There is no home for us here. We suffer and die. We —"

There was a commotion at the tent door and Conrad looked round. In the doorway stood John Conrad, blinking, incredulous.

"I saw them last night, father. I have asked them to take us with them." Conrad began to make gestures. "Us, with you, far away to the west!" It was a request easy to make clear.

Again the savages uttered their strange guttural speech. They, in turn, made motions to John Conrad and his son, that they should come with them. Not for an instant did John Conrad hesitate. Upon this miraculous encounter important things might depend.

"Conrad," he began. "while I am gone —"

"Oh, father, take me with you! I beg, take me with you!"

“Run and find Albrecht then, my son, and ask him to look after the children.”

Conrad was gone like the wind. Now the Weiser children and the neighbors were staring with terrified eyes at the red men. They gave a little scream when John Frederick toddled forward and fell over the foot of one of the Indians and then held their breaths while he was lifted high in the strong arms. John Conrad offered some of his small supply of black bread and his strange guests grunted their pleased acceptance. Then John Conrad and his son set out with the Indians to make the rounds of the camp.

What the savages thought of the assemblage of misery it was hard to say. They walked briskly so that the two Weisers could scarcely keep up with them; they pointed now to a sick child, now to some adult who showed more clearly than the others the effects of cold and anxiety and hunger. Often they motioned toward the west, a gesture which it seemed to Conrad had a heavenly significance.

When the circuit of the camp was com-

plete, they made it plain to the Weisers that they expected them to follow to the city, and father and son, looking their vague hopes into one another's eyes, obeyed eagerly.

Along the Blackheath Road they went, through Southwark and across London Bridge — how many times had Conrad traveled the road in despair! Presently, when, after they had crossed the Thames and were in the city, a man would have jostled Conrad from his place beside the leader, the Indian cried out fiercely, and the stranger dropped quickly back into the long queue of men and boys who had gathered. Now the Indians motioned to Conrad that he should walk behind the leader and his father behind him. Thus strangely escorted, the two Germans went through the streets. Conrad saw in the eyes of the boys whom they passed a look of envy. The course of fate had changed!

A few times John Conrad spoke to his son.

"Are you afraid?"

"Not I."

"Pray God that this strange way may lead to the new land."

"I will, father."

With heads erect the chiefs went on as though they trod the leafy paths of their own forests. Presently they came out upon the river-bank once more, traveled upon it for a short distance, then turned aside. The crowd about them had changed its character. Here were fine gentlemen and ladies on foot and in richly decked sedan chairs. A gentleman came forward with a sharp exclamation and pointed questioningly at the Weisers. One of the Indians answered by gestures and a few incomprehensible words, and the gentleman looked as though he were considering some strange thing. When the Indians walked on without waiting for his answer, Conrad began to be frightened.

"Where will they take us, father?"

John Conrad's voice trembled.

"They are taking us into the Queen's palace," said he.

IV

A ROYAL AUDIENCE

AT the door of St. James's Palace all but a few of the throng which followed the Indian chiefs and the Weisers were denied entrance. The finely dressed gentleman who had spoken to the Indians, and who evidently knew their own language, was allowed to pass under the stone archway and into the court and thence into the palace itself. The Indians still led the way, traveling quietly along through intricate passages and tapestry-hung halls. Courtiers passed them with curious stares.

Still they kept the two Weisers behind the leader. Presently they halted in a room where there was a fire blazing on the hearth and where fine ladies laughed and talked. On the opposite side from the entrance a thick curtain hung over a doorway. The leading chief walked directly toward it and there paused, the procession behind him coming to a stop.

A little lady sitting by the fire accepted a challenge from her companions to salute the strangers, and came across the floor, her high heels tapping as she walked.

“O great King of Rivers,” said she to the foremost Indian, “who are these your companions?”

The Indian’s answer was interpreted by the gayly dressed gentleman who understood his tongue.

“The King of Rivers says that these are his friends.”

“Thank you, Colonel Schuyler. Tell the King of Rivers that his friends need a red blanket like his own and —”

What else they needed Conrad and his father were not to hear. The curtain before them was lifted, and from the other side a high, clear voice announced, —

“The chiefs of the Mohawk Nation!”

Moving as in a dream, their eyes dazzled and their hearts confused, the two Weisers went on. They found themselves now in a still more magnificent room. At its far end there was a group of gentlemen surrounding

a lady who sat in a throne-like chair. She was grave of aspect and there was upon her face the indelible impression of grief. On her white hands and her neck were sparkling jewels. The gentlemen about her were wigged and powdered, and wore in their long sleeves white lace ruffles which almost hid their hands.

So astonished and confused was Conrad that his father had to command him twice to make obeisance.

"To your knees, boy! To your knees, Conrad! It is the Queen!"

The Indians did not bend, but stood with arms folded under their scarlet blankets, in their dark, shining eyes a look of friendly regard for the little lady who was a ruler like themselves. The Queen looked at the two Germans with curious but kindly astonishment. Neither John Conrad nor his son was in court array, though the needles of Margareta and Magdalena kept them fairly neat and whole.

"Good Peter," said Queen Anne, "who are these?"

The stranger who had interpreted for the Indians rose from his knees.

"They are Germans from the camp on Blackheath, dear madam. Your friends of the Mohawk Nation went early this morning to visit that great settlement and have brought with them from there these folk, father and son, to their appointment with the Queen. From this intention they could not be stayed, but insist that they have a communication of importance to make concerning these strangers."

The Queen looked smilingly at her Indian friends and then at the two Germans.

"The condition of those helpless people is on our minds. Let our friends of the Mohawk Nation speak."

Surely the audience room had never heard a stranger sound than that which now filled it! The tallest of the chiefs responded, speaking at length, with many sweeping gestures. Conrad strained his ears — oh, how longingly! — but could understand nothing. The chief seemed to be speaking of some spot far away and also of the two Germans. One

word Conrad heard, he was certain, again and again, but he could not retain its strange sound.

When the Indian had finished, Colonel Schuyler began to translate his words, imitating also his motions toward the west and his pointing to the Weisers.

“Your friend the King of Rivers has this to say, O Queen. He and his companions of the Mohawk Nation have walked about to see the city where so many hundreds of people live in so small a space. Far to the south they have visited also the settlement of misery known as the German camp. The distress of these people is terrible to them. It is a dreadful thing to them that men should be so crowded together when there is so much space in the world, so much land for planting corn and so many wide forests for hunting. The King of Rivers recalls to you the object of his long and perilous journey across the ocean in an unsteady ship. He reminds you that he seeks for himself and his allied nations protection against the growing power of his enemies, both Indian and French.

“Now he would offer for these poor Germans his country of Schoharie” — there was the word which Conrad had heard again and again! — “where there are fine streams for fishing and much land for planting and hunting. There, when there is no war, men and women are happiest of all the places on the earth. His people are faithful people, keeping their word, and aiding and protecting unto death those in whom they can trust. If you will send these afflicted people to Schoharie, then together the Indians and the Germans can keep the peace with the western Indians, and the French will not dare to attack them.”

The Indians nodded their heads solemnly as Colonel Schuyler finished. They had entire confidence in him and trusted him to repeat their words exactly.

The Queen looked at the two humble figures before her. Their blue eyes met hers with a great longing.

“Speak!” said she.

John Conrad took a step forward. His English was broken, but none the less eloquent.

“Oh, Madam, all they say of our misery is true. We are indeed desolate and afflicted. We have been harried by the sword; we have perished by cold and starvation. Your enemies the French are our enemies. At the hands of our own princes we have perished for conscience’ sake. We are of your faith, O Queen! — those of us that are left. The good God in heaven does not send his creatures into the world to be thus destroyed. We seek not idleness and repose for our bodies, but labor for our bodies and repose for our souls. We long as the hart pants after water brooks for this new country. You have brought us thus far out of our wilderness; send us now into this new land where there is peace! We have nothing, nothing. We cannot pay except by our labor in a new country. We ask bounty as we ask the bounty of Heaven, because we are helpless. You have already marvelously befriended us. But for you we should not be living at this day.”

The Queen turned to the gentleman who sat nearest to her.

“He speaks well, my lord.”

"He speaks from the soul, Madam."

Now the Queen conversed rapidly and in a low tone with Peter Schuyler — too rapidly for the Weisers to understand. She mentioned one Hunter of whom they knew nothing, and they waited uneasily, afraid that their audience was at an end and that nothing had been accomplished. When the door-keeper came forward and led them away, leaving their Indian friends behind, their hearts sank. They made obeisance to the Queen and went slowly toward the door, not daring to speak. Then they saw that Colonel Schuyler followed them.

"This day one week at this hour the Queen will see you again. Can you find your way thither?"

"Oh, yes, my lord!" answered John Conrad.

Outside the two met again curious glances, heard again amused comment. But they regarded neither, scarcely indeed saw the smiles or heard the laughter. Hope had once more taken up an abode in their weary hearts.

Daily in the week which followed, Conrad

made his way from Blackheath to St. James's Palace, where he gazed at the stone archway and then wandered farther hoping to see again the Indians. To the other Germans the Weisers said nothing of their hopes. The Indians had led them into the city and had there held conversation with them through an interpreter, — beyond that fact they did not go. Their fellow countrymen had been too often cruelly disappointed; until the blessed possibilities of which the Weisers dreamed had become certainties, they would say nothing.

Yet hope in their own hearts rose higher and higher. Once more Conrad read his little book, finding in his new acquaintances proof of all that was said in praise of the Indian and contradiction of all that was said in his disparagement. The word "Schoharie" he wrote down and said over and over in his waking hours and in his dreams at night.

He had formed a friendship with a lad of his own age, Peter Zenger by name, who, with his ailing father, had suffered as the Weisers had suffered and who had a similar longing

for the new land. From Peter during this week he held aloof, determined to tell his secret to no one.

Conrad thought a great deal of his father and of the attentive way in which the Queen and her court had listened to him. His father was poor and he had miserable clothes, yet he had not trembled. Of all the Germans no one, not even the magistrate of Oberdorf, who was so certain of his own powers, could have done so well.

On the morning of the appointment John Conrad and his son waited for an hour outside the palace gateway. The unkindly feeling of the populace toward the Germans had increased rather than diminished, and as they walked up and down many persons spoke roughly to them. But again, wrapped in their own anxious thoughts, they heard with indifference.

Again the Queen sat in the throne-like chair with her gentlemen about her, the same gentlemen so far as Conrad could see, except one who now sat nearest to the Queen and to whom she was speaking when they entered.

They looked in vain for their friends of the Mohawk Nation.

The Queen bade the Weisers sit side by side on a cushioned bench before her while she continued her conversation with the new-comer whom she called Hunter. Then she bade John Conrad tell again the story of his misfortunes and she listened attentively, her eyes fastened upon him.

John Conrad spoke eloquently, though brokenly, once more, and omitted nothing. When in the midst of his account of persecution and misery, one of the fine gentlemen would have stopped him, the Queen bade the story go on.

"It is good for us to hear these things. And your wife, — you say nothing of her."

Nor did John Conrad say anything. He tried, stammered, halted, tried again, and failed once more. In a second one of the fine gentlemen, Lord Marlborough, began to speak in his easy way. The Queen's face was white, her lips twitched, and she smoothed nervously the black stuff of which her dress was made. Lord Marlborough talked on

and on until the Queen herself interrupted him.

"We have heard this sad tale before, but never so well told. It is our intention to do all for these poor Germans that we can. In our colony of New York we have already settled the first of those who have come to us. There they dwell in happiness along the banks of Hudson's River and have made for themselves comfortable villages. It is our intention to establish others there in a similar way.

"In return we ask certain labors. Our enemies are many. It is necessary that we maintain for ourselves a large fleet upon the sea. Tar and pitch we must buy in great quantities from Sweden and Russia — an enormous and unnecessary expense. In our colony of New York, so says its Governor Hunter, are thousands of acres of pine trees from which we could distill, if we had the workmen, our own supplies. Do you think the Germans could make tar?"

"What others can do, we can do," answered John Conrad. "We are not below the rest of the world in intelligence, though we are

in possessions. We have among us men of many crafts—husbandmen and vine-dressers, masons and bakers and carpenters, herdsmen and blacksmiths and tanners and millers and weavers. Oh, dear lady, if we were but there!”

“The grapes of the new land are said to be finer than the grapes of France,” said Lord Marlborough. “It would not be amiss if we could draw from our own stores.”

Governor Hunter leaned forward eagerly.

“It will be time to think of wine when Her Majesty’s ships are well caulked,” said he impatiently. “The trees must be properly barked two years before they are cut and burned. There will be no time for vine-dressing. The project is as sure of success as the rising of the sun. It cannot fail. Meanwhile, there will be work in other crafts also as in all new settlements. It is understood that the Germans have here an opportunity to repay some of the great expense to which we have been put on their account.”

“We would not have it otherwise,” cried John Conrad. “We are not beggars, except

as we beg for a chance to earn our bread. Would that we might begin to-day to pay our great debt!"

The Queen smiled.

"We must have ships, and they are not easy to find in a sufficient number at present to transport this host. But tell your friends to hold themselves in readiness."

Now Conrad breathed a long sigh.

"The lad looks at me with a question in his eyes," said the Queen. "What is it, boy?"

"Will our new home be near these kind Indians?" asked Conrad, trembling.

"Governor Hunter, what of this?"

"There are Indians everywhere in plenty," said he.

Colonel Schuyler rose, and John Conrad, feeling himself dismissed, rose also.

The Queen stopped them with a lifted hand.

"About these same Indians, good Weiser. Our possessions lie along the east coast of this great and unexplored country. To the north and to the west, along the course of a vast river and the shores of large inland bodies of

water, the French have by guile got possession of the land. Between live tribes of savages, upon whose friendship depends enormous issues. Give thought to this, you and your friends. These Indians who are here represent a great nation or confederation of nations, skilled in the warfare of the forest. It is important that they continue to be our friends. I am told that they do not regard lightly deceit of any sort, and that their revenge upon the treacherous is hideous beyond all describing. Now, fare you well."

Again John Conrad tried to speak his gratitude, but could say no word. He dropped to his knees once more, then rose and followed Colonel Schuyler to the door. There Colonel Schuyler put a gold piece into his hand.

"For you and Magdalena and Margareta and John Frederick and the others," said he. "The Queen's bounty."

By noon of the next day, the German settlement was ready to take ship. John Conrad, as he carried his remarkable announcement from tent to tent and from fire to fire, gave warning that sailing might still be delayed,

that the ships were not yet in the harbor, that only a few hundreds could be carried on each vessel, and that these hundreds would be selected according to a method of which they knew nothing.

But the Germans would not hear. They packed their belongings once more into bundles, and depression gave place to good cheer, solemnity to hilarity. Some let the fires before their tents go out and all spent their small remaining sums of money for provisions to take on shipboard.

Alas, bundles were unpacked, fires were relighted, and the food purchased for the sea eaten on land long before the ships were in harbor and the Germans on board. Some of the bundles were then packed once more by other hands. Before the hour for sailing hundreds of pilgrims, among them the disappointed magistrate of Oberdorf, had come to the end of their journey. The Blackheath camp had become a camp of death.

In the weeks which now followed, John Conrad was summoned twice to the palace, not to see the Queen or to meet his Indian

benefactors, but to have explained to him, as the chief representative of the Germans, their duties in the new world. Once more the need of the English navy for tar was made clear and the method for extracting it from the pine trees carefully explained. Governor Hunter, who talked to John Conrad at length, was quick of speech and temper, a man who brooked no opposition and listened to few questions.

To John Conrad was presented a contract for his signature and that of other Germans, by which they were to promise to perform that which the Queen required. With happy hearts they promised; with overflowing gratitude they heard that they were to receive, after their debt to the Government was paid, twenty-five dollars and forty acres of land.

Finally, as Christmas Day drew near, good news came to Blackheath. Ships would be provided for all, the first sailing on Christmas Day. Assigned to the first ship were the Weisers and Conrad's friend Peter Zenger and his father. The rabble of London gathered at the camp to see the Germans start,

but now their taunts fell on deaf ears. The new country was just across the sea; peace and plenty were at hand. They thought with sad regret of those who had started with them, but who were no longer here to continue the journey.

Though it was winter, the Germans thought little of the storms which they would meet at sea. They were landsmen who knew nothing of the fierce power of the ocean. If they remembered the roughness of the Channel crossing, it was with the consoling reflection that the ocean was there confined to narrow bounds, like the Rhine where its rapids were so swift. It was true that Conrad's little book advised various precautions against illness and misery. But they refused to think of illness or misery. With their long journey so nearly ended, they could endure both.

Conrad brought out from its hiding-place George Reimer's flute and discovered to his delight that Peter Zenger had a drum. Perhaps there would be other instruments upon the ship and a band could be formed.

To the eyes of Conrad and Peter the ship

Lyon looked enormous as it lay in the harbor, its mighty sails furled. From its sides there projected four cannon, regarded by the two boys with terror and delight. A sailor standing on the quay explained that they were to deal with the French and with pirates.

"Pirates!" repeated Conrad. "What are they?"

"They are freebooters," explained Peter. "I have heard of them. They attack any one whom they please and kill and rob."

"Are we *sure* to meet them?" asked Conrad.

"They come out from the shore like wolves," answered the sailor. "But with these cross dogs we can scare them off."

But whether there were pirates or not, whether there were storms to meet, or whether they were to sail in a continued calm, the Germans must now get aboard. On Christmas morning the first four hundred embarked upon the ship Lyon for another stage of the long journey.

V

ACROSS THE SEA

SO welcome had been the sight of the ship, so blessed the prospect of being able to set out once more, that the Weisers and their friends had no fault to find with the meager provision which had been made for them. They trooped joyfully aboard, disposing themselves and their goods as well as they could. It was true that what seemed to be a large space shrank amazingly as the passengers found places for the bundles and boxes which remained in their possession in spite of all their misfortunes, but of lack of space they made light. Thus crowded together they would not suffer so dreadfully from the cold as they had in the open tents of Blackheath. Besides, the journey would soon be over. Those who had misgivings as the shores of England dropped out of sight, smiled to see Conrad and Peter gazing longingly from the boat's prow toward the west.

In comparison with the journey down the Rhine the journey across the Atlantic is dull to most travelers. There are no interesting waitings at landings, there are no towering castles, there are no flowery meadows. But to the children on the ship *Lyon* there was no moment without its entertainment. There was, to begin with, the never-ending motion of the sea; there was, for the first few days, the almost hourly sight of a distant sail. Presently they began to watch for the spouting of whales and for the dipping and soaring of creatures which were half bird, half fish.

The voyage began in a long and unusual calm, so that the older folk could sit comfortably on the deck in the sunshine and the children could scamper about at their games. The captain and the crew were kind and patient, as they needed to be to answer the numberless questions about the ship and her rudder and her white sails and the wide sea upon which she traveled. The mate had crossed the Atlantic Ocean four times and had been many times to Marseilles: to the shivering girls and the delighted boys he told

a hundred tales of storms, of waves covering the ship, of rigging locked in ice, of flights from pirates and of battles with the French.

"Shall we meet storms like that?" they asked, terrified, yet eager.

"I've crossed when the sea was like a raging lion," answered the mate, to please the boys; "and when she was like a smooth pond," he added, to please the girls.

Presently the mate rigged up a fishing-line with which the boys took turns. Peter Zenger added an edible dolphin to the ship's food — that was the first catch. Then, Conrad, feeling a powerful tug at his line, was convinced that he had caught a whale, and screamed for help.

"It will pull me over," he called. "Come quickly!"

The sailor who came to his aid laughed.

"You could have let go!"

When they hauled in the catch it proved to be a shark, at whose enormous mouth and hideous teeth the girls screamed. Thereafter they scarcely looked over the side of the ship.

Among themselves the older folk reviewed again and again their persecutions, their

griefs, and their hopes. To the younger men and women John Conrad talked long and earnestly.

“If all that we hear is true, children, this new land will be the finest land in the world. There are fertile fields; there are great forests and rivers, such as we know nothing of; there are rich ores. Above all, there are young, eager hearts. I believe that there will also be new governments, which will, please God, be different from the old. In this new country every man should have a fair chance. I am growing old, I shall not have much to do with the affairs of the new country, but my children may. Let them remember their own history and be always on the side of the oppressed. You may be divided from one another. Our new friends may forsake us. You will have griefs and sorrows like the rest of mankind. You must learn to find companionship in yourselves and help from above. You must learn to be independent of others, even of those who love you and whom you love.”

Daily Conrad and Peter practiced on their flute and drum. There were, as they had

hoped, other instruments on the ship and a band was organized which played many lively tunes. Sometimes the boys were allowed to help with the furling of a sail or the giving out of the supply of food and water. They were shown by the friendly mate the ship's store of arms and ammunition, a store which seemed to their inexperienced eyes sufficient to meet a whole fleet of pirates.

"If they would but come!" sighed Conrad and Peter to themselves.

Presently John Conrad's watchful eyes saw a new expression in the eyes of his oldest daughter. She sat often by herself, and when she joined the general company one of the young men, Baer by name, was certain to put himself as soon as possible by her side. John Conrad sighed, scolded his son Conrad and Peter Zenger for their constant punning on the young man's name, and then took his own medicine.

"They must leave me one by one," said he to himself. "Magdalena will doubtless soon be showing the same signs. Thank God, they can start together in a land of peace and plenty!"

Through January all went well with the pilgrims. Then Peter Zenger's father succumbed to the disease with which he had been afflicted. The end was sudden to no one but Peter, who would not be comforted. To him John Conrad talked when the solemn burial was completed.

"You believe in God and Heaven, dear child. Your father was worn and weary and he is at rest until the last day. You are young with life before you. You have your new country; to it you must devote yourself, heart and soul. The good God closes all gates sometimes so that we may see the more plainly the one through which He means we should go."

With the death of Zenger the character of the journey changed. As the calm of the early part of January had been extraordinary, so now were the storms. There appeared one morning along the western horizon a low bank of clouds which the children took at first, in wild enthusiasm, for land. As the clouds rose higher and higher, the color of the sea changed to a strange oily gray, and suddenly the ship began to rock as though

the waves were rising like the clouds. Now a great wind whistled in the rigging with a sound different from any which the passengers had heard.

"What is it, father?" cried Sabina. "I am afraid."

The Germans looked at one another ominously.

For many days there was no sitting about the deck. No passenger was allowed, indeed, to leave the hold of the ship. The vessel, which had come to seem as solid as the earth, was tossed about like a cork. Again and again waves covered it, again and again with sails closely furled it fought for its life. The coverings of the hatchways were burst open and the sea rushed in. Giving themselves up many times for lost, the passengers tried to be as brave as they could. Those who could keep on their feet did all that lay in their power for their companions, and through the intolerable hours they prayed. When, once or twice during the storm, the captain visited them, they took courage from him.

"Conrad shall still catch a whale," said he

in a voice which was cheerful through all its weary hoarseness. "And Peter shall play his drum, and the young maidens shall smile upon the young men."

Finally the long storm died away. The passengers were startled to realize that the Lyon shook and quivered no longer, that silence had succeeded the dreadful creaking in the timbers and the fearful whistling in the rigging, and that as the storm abated they had each one fallen asleep.

Now followed many days of cold, bright weather. Again the travelers sought the deck and the sunshine. Peter Zenger was able to remind Conrad one day, with a weak little smile, of the advice given by the book of directions.

"It would have taken a pretty lively swing to prepare us for such a shaking," said he.

In a day or two Peter lifted his drum and the band returned to its practicing. At first they played solemn tunes; then, with returning color to their cheeks, came fresh cheerfulness and courage. Even the older folk joined cheerfully in "Susy, dear Susy."

The sailors mended the sails, the girls took out their knitting, and the children played about on the deck.

But the whole-hearted gayety of the early journey did not return. The great storm had taken fearful toll, and there were already twenty passengers less than there had been at the beginning. The crowding of the ship had become a serious menace to health. There were a few sick persons at whom the captain looked more anxiously than he had looked at the angry clouds or the tempestuous sea. Not the least of the dangers of the long journey were various diseases, contagious and deadly, which, once started, could scarcely be checked.

Now another terrible peril threatened the ship Lyon. The supply of food brought by the passengers was entirely exhausted, and that furnished by the ship was small in quantity and hardly edible. The drinking-water had become foul, and through a leak in one of the wooden casks a large quantity had been lost. Passengers and crew watched the sky for a cloud.

88 THE LONG JOURNEY

When at last the cloud appeared, it was accompanied again by the terrible wind and the heaving sea of the great storm. Again the passengers spent a week in the hold while the ship battled with a tempest which broke the rudder. Their respect for the captain and the stanch vessel which carried them grew to admiration and then to awe.

"It is no wonder they call the ship 'she,'" said Conrad feebly. "One would think it was alive. It is well named 'Lyon,' for it fights for us like a lion."

Again the passengers returned to the deck, more weak and miserable than before. The supply of water gathered in the storm sank lower and lower in the cask, the rations of salt pork and sea biscuit became daily smaller. Finally a day dawned when the supply of water was gone and the supply of food so low that starvation and death were imminent. John Conrad went about from group to group telling of the glories of the heavenly country to which their passage seemed now but the matter of a short time.

Then came help. A faint speck appeared upon the horizon. The children, when they saw it, flew to the captain, who, they discovered, had been watching it for an hour. It grew larger and larger, not into the shape of a rain cloud, but into the shape of a vessel. Young Conrad guessed the nature of the hope in the captain's eager eyes.

"Might they have food and water for us?"

The captain shook his head.

"We cannot tell. They may be as badly off as we are."

The ship came closer and closer, flying, they saw joyfully, the pennant of England. The passengers grew silent and eyes burned and hearts almost ceased to beat. Presently they were able to hear a shout across the smooth sea. It was surely a friendly hail, and still the ship came nearer and nearer. Then the travelers heard, almost unbelieving, the blessed words: —

"We have potatoes and ground beans and dried venison from Her Majesty's colony. Do you wish to buy?"

"Yes," shouted the captain: "all you have."

"We have water, also. Do you need any?"

To this replied a hurrah from every throat on the ship Lyon.

"Thank God! Thank God!" cried the poor Germans.

In a short time the water casks were aboard and with them bags of vegetables and meat. For several hours the ship stood near and the sailors coming aboard the Lyon showed the Germans how to roast the potatoes in an open fire on the deck. Never had food tasted so good and water so delicious. It was a happy promise from the new country.

But the ship which brought this welcome freight brought also bad news. The freebooters along the coast were unusually active. The captain of the Lyon must look well to his guns. Everywhere in the ports of the new country one heard of ships boarded, of treasure taken, and of crew and passengers murdered. The more closely the vessel approached the shores of America, the greater was the danger.

The Germans looked at one another with despair.

"We have suffered as much as we can bear!" cried some one.

"We have no treasures," said John Conrad to the captain. "Why should any one molest people so poor as we are?"

"My ship would be a treasure for them," answered the captain. "For that they would murder every soul on board."

Daily the passengers were assembled and drilled. The crew was only sufficient to sail the ship; for its defense the passengers would have to be depended upon. They were instructed in the firing of the cannon and informed about the methods of pirates in attacking a vessel.

"I have stood them off before," said the captain, uneasily, to John Conrad. "But I have always had more powder than I have now and a few trained gunners. If they are once aboard, we shall have to fight like tigers for our lives. They give no quarter."

Now sabers and pistols were laid ready so that there might be no confusion when the pirate ship was sighted. The women and children eyed the weapons fearfully; the men

tried to laugh at their alarm. No one but the very youngest of the children slept the night through.

But no pirate ship appeared. The air grew softer and warmer; all began to breathe more freely and to look ahead, not for the ship of the dread enemy, but for the land. Eyes of passengers and crew were weary of the sea.

"They are afraid of our cross dogs," said Conrad, half wishing, as the danger faded, for a battle.

"Perhaps some brave captain has swept them from the sea," said Peter. "That would be a work I should like. I should board their ships as they have boarded others and then I should give no quarter."

At last, after the captain had declared the danger past, and had jokingly bidden the boys keep constant eyes upon the west for the promised land, the sailor on watch gave a loud cry: —

"Ship, ahoy!"

At once the passengers crowded to the prow of the boat. The approaching ship was

a tiny speck, visible only to the sharpest eyes. For a long time it seemed to remain stationary; then they realized that it was steadily approaching. Children began to cry and mothers to hold them closer and closer.

"It is coming very fast, is it not?" said Conrad to the captain.

"Pretty fast."

"It is not necessarily a pirate ship," said John Conrad. "It may be a friendly ship."

"I believe it brings us good water and more food," said Sabina.

"I am sure that I can see the English flag," said George Frederick.

But the passengers were not allowed to linger long at the prow speculating about the strange vessel. Suddenly hopes were dashed and all speculations and prophecies interrupted by a sharp order from the captain. Women and children were to go below and each man was to take his place at once at the post assigned him. The ammunition — a perilously small store — was divided. Conrad and Peter Zenger were the youngest pas-

sengers who were allowed to stay on deck. They had been included in the drills, but for them there was now neither gun nor powder. They were given orders to keep out of the way of the crew and the older men. If any of the defenders fell, they might take their places. The two boys crouched down close to the mast, not venturing to go below to put away the drum and flute upon which they had been playing when the alarm was given.

Nearer and nearer came the strange ship. It was not so large as the Lyon, and it responded far more quickly to its helm. In the quickening breeze from the west it advanced with great speed. It floated no pennant—the wish of the Germans had been father to the thought.

Now a sailor in the masthead of the Lyon sent out a friendly hail. There was no answer. Again the sailor shouted. Still there was no reply. The crew of the Lyon could see now plainly armed men upon the deck of the stranger. The captain spoke in a whisper to the mate.

“We have powder for two rounds. Not

enough to keep them off for five minutes. We —”

The stranger seemed actually to leap ahead, and the captain's eyes flashed. He raised his hands before his mouth like a trumpet.

“Fire!”

The two cannon which pointed toward the strange ship spit out a long streak of flame, and the Lyon trembled with a terrific detonation.

When the smoke cleared away, it was plainly to be seen that the pirates were not frightened by the warning shots. The balls had fallen short, and the pirate ship sailed on, as though to take quick advantage of the time required to reload the cannon. It was now so near that the evil faces could be clearly discerned upon its deck.

VI

THE PIRATE SHIP

IT was small wonder that the passengers on the Lyon were almost paralyzed with terror. They were not soldiers, nor accustomed to taking the part of soldiers, and they were not fighting upon a battlefield, distant from their loved ones, but close to them where the danger threatened alike themselves and all they held dear. The fact made them at once more courageous and more terrified.

It was known by all that powder was short and that the accuracy of the next shot would probably decide their fate. Their hands grew more and more awkward, their cheeks whiter. Conrad and Peter sprang to their feet, seeing plainly the panic on the faces of the gunners who were trying to reload the cannon, and upon the faces of the others who stood, saber or pistol in hand, waiting for what seemed to be certain destruction. One frightened soul fired his pistol prematurely, another waved

his saber wildly in the air. If the freebooters saw, they must have anticipated an easy victory.

"If we only had pistols!" cried Peter shrilly.

The captain shouted fierce orders, and still the gunners fumbled at their task.

Now Conrad ran to the captain's side. A wild plan had suddenly occurred to him.

"We could play," cried he breathlessly, "Peter and I. There was a trumpeter on a castle wall who played and played till —"

"Play, then!"

With trembling lips and hands the two boys began. The flute gave forth a sharp piping, the drum tried to roar as fiercely as the cannon. There was at first no tune, there was at first, indeed, only a mad discord. And still the pirate ship came on.

"Louder! Louder! Louder!" The boys did not know whether they had heard or had imagined the command. They were playing "Susy, dear Susy," and playing it like a jig. As though its sprightliness steadied them, arms grew stronger, breath more even. The

gunners heard, the infantry heard, the women and children shivering in the hold heard, and best of all the evil men on the pirate ship heard. The hands of the gunners trembled a little less, the hands which held the pistols and sabers grasped them more firmly, the women and children looked with a tiny bit of hope into one another's eyes, and the pirates looked at one another with astonishment.

It may have been that the captain of the pirate ship did not care to try conclusions with a force which could spare men to play the drum and flute; it may have been that he could observe that the firing of the second shot was the matter of only a second or two; or it may have been that merely the lively defiance of "Susy, dear Susy," discouraged him. At any rate, he altered the course of his vessel. When the second shot sailed after him, he had darted out of range.

At first the passengers of the Lyon stared as though a spell had been put upon them. A moment ago they had been in danger of their lives; now they were safe while the en-

emy sailed away. Some laughed aloud, others wiped their eyes, and a sailor flung open the hatchway and shouted the good news to the anxious hearts below.

Though the distance between the Lyon and her enemy grew wider and wider until presently the stranger had vanished over the horizon's edge, the sailors kept watch until nightfall.

But the passengers gave no thought now to an enemy. They saw, late in the afternoon, a sailor lowering the sounding-line over the ship's side. They had watched this process many times. But the earnestness of the sailor and the eager watching of his companions gave it a new significance. Into the group at the ship's edge young Conrad forced his way.

"How much?" said he.

The sailors paid no attention and Conrad concluded to wait. Presently the line was drawn in and the sailor announced to the captain in a loud voice, —

"Thirty-five fathoms, sir."

"That is shallow," said Conrad. "Is there any danger?"

The sailors laughed.

"There is danger of seeing land to-morrow," said one.

To this no one made any reply for a long moment. Then another shout arose like the one which had greeted the arrival of water and food. In one moment the news had spread: in another, though the captain laughed, the women were descending to pack boxes and to tie up the bundles in the hold.

But no one stayed long below the deck. Margareta and Magdalena with one bundle packed climbed back to look toward the west. John Conrad's expectation was being realized; there was now a young man by the side of Magdalena also. The captain laughed at them for watching for land as he laughed at them for packing.

"To-morrow, my children, not to-day. You may look your eyes out to-day and you will see nothing, and there will be plenty of time after we see land for you to pack your clothes."

Nevertheless, the Germans looked and looked, though, as the captain prophesied,

they saw nothing. But they would not leave their place in the bow. Sitting together, they reviewed the journey and the more distant past. They spoke of the Fatherland, of those left behind who might some day follow them, like George Reimer, of those, like the magistrate of Oberdorf, whom they should never see again, and of those already on the way in other ships. They spoke also in quiet voices of those who slept, like the mother of the Weisers, in quiet graveyards. They spoke of bondage and liberty and of war and peace and of a strange new freedom, of which there was in the hearts of a few a dim conception, like the tiny seed of a mighty tree. They spoke with gratitude of the good Queen and offered a prayer for her, and for other friends, like the good helmsman on the river boat. They spoke of the strange red people, and Conrad must find his little book and read once more of their skill as hunters, of their devotion in friendship and of their ferocity in war and in revenge. Longest of all they talked of the King of Rivers and his companions.

“It is my object to find them first of all,”

said Conrad. "I am sure they are looking for us to come to the country which they gave us."

Once again must Conrad and Peter and the rest of the band play their old tunes, grave and gay, mournful and lively; once again must all join in song. Twilight came and then the starry, summer night, and still the pilgrims sat gazing toward the west. All night a few kept vigil.

At daylight every one was on deck. The morning dawned in splendor, but no one turned to watch the rising sun. At last, when the bright rays illuminated the whole of earth and heaven, they saw through tears the low shores of the promised land.

But now that land was in sight, the Lyon was not able to get into the harbor. Already as the passengers watched the shore a storm was rising. It was not so severe as those which had gone before nor so long continued, but it was far more alarming since the ship was now in danger of being cast upon the reefs. It seemed for many days that the passengers had endured all for naught. It was

like being sent back into mid-ocean to suffer once more all the fearful trials through which they had lived. Again the captain grew wan and hollow-eyed, again the travelers lived for days in the hold of the ship, again there was sickness and death. Some of those who had seen the promised land saw it no more, nor any earthly land. There was no concealing the fact that those who were ill had ship fever, which was almost certain, in the conditions in which the patients had to live, to be fatal. Little John Frederick, the youngest of the Weisers, about whose health they had long felt anxiety, grew worse, so that his brothers and sisters could not look at him without tears. Still the pilgrims were patient and kind, still they tried not to murmur at this new dispensation of Providence.

“Courage!” said John Conrad a dozen times a day, to himself, as well as to his companions. “Many a good enterprise has failed because those who undertook it could not endure quite to the end.”

The pilgrims were to have, alas, need for all the courage and patience which they could

summon. When a long swell succeeded the fierce beating of the waves and the skies cleared, they sought the deck once more, and hurried to the prow. There they stared at one another in amazement and terror. The promised land at which they had looked with such longing eyes had vanished.

"What has become of it?" asked a bewildered company.

"It is still exactly where it was," answered the captain. "It is we who have changed our place."

"When shall we see it again?"

The captain reassured them with a cheerfulness which he did not feel. The ship had been driven far out of its course; it would take many days to win again a view of the low-lying shores.

It was now June. Unless conditions in the new world were very different from those in the old, the season for planting was almost passed: and John Conrad's eagerness to be settled grew to anxiety. Whatever young Conrad's book might say about the strength of the sun in America, it was certain that the

pilgrims must have a house and some stores of food and fuel with which to meet the winter. Again they gazed toward the west until, between the blinding glare of the sun on the smooth sea and their own tears, they could see no more.

But like all evils in the world the long journey came to an end. The travelers had given up rising before dawn to watch the first beams of the sun strike on the western shores, when one bright morning a shout awoke them.

“Land! Land! Land!” Though it needed but one call to rouse the sleepers, the sailor called a dozen times, as though the joyful news could not be too often proclaimed.

The travelers crowded on deck; they saw the shore much nearer at hand than it had been before, and green instead of a dull, indeterminate color; they were surrounded by fluttering birds; they sniffed upon the air a different odor, an odor of land and growing things. Then with one accord their eyes sought the sky to see if once more a cloud threatened them.

But there was no cloud even so large as a

man's hand, and the dangerous reefs were passed safely.

"But we are not moving!" cried young Conrad. "What is the matter?"

The captain pointed ahead, and Conrad saw a long rowboat cutting the water.

"We can't go into the harbor without a pilot," said the captain. "Here he comes."

Indifferent to the fact that their belongings were, after all their planning, not ready to be carried to the shore, the passengers hung over the side of the ship. There was a loud hail from the little boat, and an answering shout from the captain of the Lyon.

Suddenly Conrad cried out and seized his father by the arm.

"Look! Look!"

"What is it, lad?"

Then John Conrad saw for himself. The rowers were dark-skinned, black-haired creatures whose great bare bodies gleamed in the sun. The King of Rivers and his friends had been blanketed, but there was no mistaking these for any but men of their race.

"They are Indians," said Conrad, in awe.

Now a rope ladder was flung over the side of the ship and the pilot came aboard. He shook hands with the captain and the mate, and then lifted from the hands of an Indian who had followed him a roughly woven basket.

"I always bring something for the birds," said he in a loud voice as he uncovered it.

For a moment both children and adults could only stare at him dumbly. He was real, he came from America, and America had begun to seem like the figment of a dream: his was a new face, and they had seen no new faces for months.

But when the children looked into his basket, they ran forward. Here were cherries for mouths which had forgotten the taste of fruit; here were strawberries for lips which had never touched strawberries. An old woman began to weep.

"Cherries like those in the gardens of Württemberg, God be thanked!"

John Conrad looked at the pilot a little uneasily.

"We cannot pay," said he.

The pilot popped a strawberry into the mouth of John Frederick.

"Tut, tut," said he, "you are in a land of plenty. To-morrow when I come to take you in I will bring more."

"To-morrow!" echoed a dozen voices. "Oh, sir, can we not go in to-day?"

The pilot shook his head.

"Not till to-morrow."

"But the storm came before and drove us far away."

"No storm will drive you away now."

With sinking hearts the pilgrims saw the pilot descend again over the side of the ship and enter his boat and row away.

"I do not believe he will return," said one despairing soul.

But in a few minutes the speaker and every one else on board had begun to pack. Pots and dishes, pans and kettles, clothes, a few spinning-wheels, the few treasured books — all were boxed or wrapped or corded together. The Weisers, remembering gayly that they had once made nine bundles for eight persons, made careful division of their belongings.

"The spinning-wheel is not here and dear Wolf is not here, but we have everything else," said Margareta.

"Including a tame bear," ventured Conrad, knowing that there would be no boxing of ears to-day.

To the laughing astonishment of the travelers, the pilot was on the deck in the morning when they came up to greet the sun. He rallied them upon their laziness and passed out another gift of fruit, and then took command of the ship. To the keen disappointment of the boys the Indians did not come on board, but were towed in their rowboat.

Past the low shores of Long Island, nearer and nearer to the village of New York moved the Lyon, more and more excited grew the pilgrims.

"I can see houses!"

"And smoke rising from chimneys!"

"And men walking about!"

"There is a wharf with people on it!"

"We are here at last, at last!"

Some one started a hymn and a single stanza was sung. Then voices failed.

John Conrad stood silently, his older children close to him and little John Frederick in his arms. With them was Peter Zenger, his arm round Conrad's neck. John Conrad saw the house and the people and the strange shore, and the certainty of impending change swept over him. These — his boys and girls — what would befall them? They were his now, but the new land must divide them from him. Each must do his work. Already the sound of voices drifted to him from this alien shore. He longed to put into one sentence all his love and hope. With brimming eyes he looked at his little flock for whom he had made the long journey, for whom he had forgotten sadness and heartache.

"Children," he said. "Margareta and Magdalena and Sabina and Conrad —" John Conrad's voice faltered. In a moment he began once more with a new message. "Children, — George and Christopher and Barbara and little John and dear Peter, — here is now your Fatherland."

VII

THE HOME ASSIGNED

CLOSE together the Weisers stepped from the gangplank of the Lyon. Their question as to what they were to do was soon solved by their prompt shepherding from the wharf into small boats by the officers of the port.

"Where do we go?" asked John Conrad in astonishment.

"There has been ship fever on the Lyon," answered some one. "You go to Nuttall's Island."

Like millions to follow them, the Germans soon gazed from Nuttall's Island across the bay. They were given little houses to live in, and as the magistrate of Oberdorf had greeted them on Blackheath, they greeted presently their friends from the other ships. There were happy reunions, there were stories of death and danger by sea, there was the common hope of better things.

When the cool winds of September began to blow and they were still waiting to be released from what seemed like captivity, the Germans became impatient and then frightened. They wished to set to work so that they might the sooner finish their task of tar-making and begin to labor on their own account. During the long journey boys and girls had grown up; like Conrad, other boys longed for adventure, and like Margareta, other young women wished to begin the establishment of a home. Among the Germans there was suddenly a new spirit of independence. Here was not the goal for which they had striven.

"The Governor has not completed his arrangements," said John Conrad to his impatient countrymen.

"Then let us go to that Schoharie which the Indians gave us." Conrad spoke for all the younger Germans.

"We are bound to make tar," reminded John Conrad, who looked at his son in amazement.

Presently came Governor Hunter, who had crossed the ocean in one of the last ships of

the fleet. His visit, so eagerly expected, had a sorrowful outcome. From one end of the settlement to the other he walked and at the cabin of John Conrad he paused.

"You are to go soon to Livingston Manor to begin your work. You are the man who was in the Queen's audience room. I depend upon you to be a good influence among your fellows." His bright gaze traveled from child to child. "You have a large family."

Before John Conrad could answer, young Conrad stepped from the doorway, disregarding his father's frown.

"Oh, sir, I wish we might go to Schoharie!"

Governor Hunter looked at him coldly.

"You will go where I send you."

When the Governor had gone, his agent announced a startling command which he had left. Among the Germans were too many children. In New York and on Long Island were farmers and merchants who needed help. To them the orphans and some other young lads must be apprenticed.

"Not our children!" cried Magdalena.

John Conrad shook his head ominously. He had counted his children over before he left the ship,—was separation to come so soon? That evening he admonished gentle Christopher and grave George Frederick tenderly and solemnly.

“We must submit to the Governor’s will,” said he. “My little lads know what is right. To do right is all that is required of them.”

The next day boats anchored at Nuttall’s Island and from them stepped English and Dutch farmers and their wives. Upon the heads of Christopher and George Frederick were laid a pair of plump hands.

“These I would like,” said a kind voice.

The eager eyes of the Weiser family gazed through tears.

“Both together?” asked John Conrad thickly.

“Both together,” answered the farmer’s wife. “We have a good farm and no children.” When she saw that little Christopher cried, she put her hand into the deep pocket in the skirt of her husband’s coat and drew out a bar of maple sugar, the only candy of

the colonies. "I put something in my pocket for my new children." Then she sat down on the rough bench before the little door. "The boats will not go back for a long time to come. In the mean time we will talk."

Now more tears were shed, but they were not bitter tears. The English of the Weisers was broken, but it sufficed to relate the sad history of Gross Anspach, the kindness of George Reimer, the cruel cold on Blackheath, and the dangers of the sea. When the time for parting came, the Weisers trooped to the boats. Peter Zenger was to go also, with a brisk printer, Bradford by name. Hands were waved until they could wave no longer; then the Weisers turned back to their little hut.

"Two are gone," said John Conrad, bewildered. "My dear children! My dear children!" Then poor John Conrad burst once more into tears.

When in November twelve hundred of the four thousand Germans who had left Blackheath ascended the Hudson River, there was another grievous parting. Margareta's young man had found work in New York, but until

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he earned a little he and Margareta could not marry. One of the Weisers, at least, looked back instead of forward as the heavily laden boats made their slow way up the stream. Conrad wished to stay also and find work, but neither the Governor's agent nor his father would give him permission. The agent, Cast by name, was sharp of tongue, and with him the young men had begun to dispute. Others like Conrad were strong of will and hot of temper. In the long period of waiting, gratitude to the English had somewhat faded.

The arrival at the new home was dreary. Upon the stretch of forest in which the settlement was to be made there was only the agent's comfortable log house. It was late afternoon when the pilgrims were put ashore. At sight of the unimproved and repellent spot they looked at one another in dismay.

"Is it for this that we have come so far?"

John Conrad began again his old work of encouragement.

"At last we have work to do. By night we must have some sort of shelter."

The next day substantial houses of logs began to rise among the tall pine trees. John Conrad's suspicions about his second daughter proved to be true. Quiet Magdalena and the young man upon whom she had smiled announced that they, too, would build a house.

Then, when houses were built and logs were burning in the great chimneys, the Germans waited idly. Tar-making was not to begin, it seemed, until spring. Again John Conrad counseled patience.

"We are here, we cannot get away and, moreover, we have given our word. We are fed and clothed. In the spring things will be better. We cannot expect everything at once."

Young Conrad answered sharply.

"The men say that this land will never be good farming land, father. After the pine trees are cut, we shall have nothing. I would find that Schoharie which the Indians gave us. There is our home."

John Conrad shook his head.

"We must have patience," said he.

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Slowly the winter passed. In the cold of January little John Frederick, so loved and cherished, died, and was the first of the colony to be buried in the new land.

“Now,” said John Conrad, “it is our land, indeed.”

In April Magdalena was married by a clergyman who came from the older German settlement across the river. The wedding was merry: even Margareta, who had heard but once from her lover, put anxiety away and smiled and danced the old-fashioned dances of Gross Anspach weddings. When Magdalena had gone to the little log house with her husband, John Conrad sat before his door.

“She has done well. Now of nine, only four are left me.”

Once during the winter Conrad saw an Indian. The tall figure crossed the end of a little glade and as fast as he could Conrad pursued it. But the Indian had vanished; there was neither sound nor motion in the still forest. Gradually, their lands taken from them, themselves often ill-treated, the Indians

were withdrawing from the neighborhood of the settlements.

In great excitement Conrad hurried to his father.

"Father, I have seen an Indian. Let us ask him to guide us to Schoharie!"

"We are not permitted to go."

"Let us go without permission. I can fight, father."

Again John Conrad regarded his son with astonishment.

"We have come for peace, not for war. God knows we have suffered enough from war! Let me hear no more of such madness, Conrad, and sit no more with the young men, but with your sisters."

In the early spring tools were given out for the cutting of the pine trees and slashes were made in the tough bark so that the sap might gather. In two years the trees would be felled and burned in kilns.

In the early summer came a new command. Over the great continent evil forces were astir. Like the bent bow, the line of the French and their allied Indians stretched

from Montreal to New Orleans, its curve including the Mississippi; like the string within stretched the English line. There was conflict at Montreal where the Five Nations were true to their English alliance, and thither the Germans were to go in three companies. At once they forgot their wrongs and willingly they started, John Conrad in command of a company.

The Germans gave the Queen little help, not because they were not willing and able, but because the short campaign was almost over. They marched back as they had come, congratulating themselves upon the pay they would receive for military service. At last they could buy a few spinning-wheels and perhaps a horse and cow.

But the Governor's agent laughed.

"Does a man pay extra to his servants?"

"You did not give us our due food while they were away!" cried young Conrad.

The agent shook his fist.

"Return your arms and get back to your work!"

When the arms were returned, a dozen

guns were lacking. The older Germans were clearly puzzled, but the guns could not be found.

In a week the Governor came again to visit his colony. His shoulders were bent and his countenance had changed. The good Queen was dead and the support promised for his cherished enterprise of tar-making came slowly from her successor. To the Governor appealed now the leading men of the settlement. Perhaps it was the cruel contrast between his magnificence and their rags which made him at first willing to listen and to conciliate.

As John Conrad had talked bravely and simply to the Queen, so he spoke to the Governor. The oldest of the settlers shared by this time the discontent of the young men.

"It is almost a year since we came and we have done nothing for ourselves. Even if we can make tar, we are not advanced because this land is not farming land. We beg to be allowed to go to that country which the Indians gave us, where we can have permanent homes. Is there no pine there?"

The Governor made no answer.

"And we would have pay for our service as soldiers. We are very poor, as you can see, and soldiering was not in our bargain."

The Governor smiled as his agent had smiled.

"You will serve yourself and your friends best by counseling obedience," said he. "You cannot go away."

When the Governor had gone, his agent walked down the street of the settlement. In his path stood young Conrad, who forgot once more his father's admonitions.

"The Germans have guns, sir," said Conrad.

Cast returned at once to his house. In a moment his servant was riding rapidly along the river-bank to intercept the Governor at the next settlement, twenty miles away.

"I am charged with a message to Your Honor," he cried breathlessly at sight of the Governor. "The German people are armed. Our lives are not safe."

The Governor sailed up the river once more. When he reached Livingston Manor, it

was dark and the Germans knew nothing of his coming nor of the prompt departure of the agent's servant through the forest to the north. The next afternoon they were called together. To their amazement the Governor appeared. In a stern voice he read a contract to them.

"But that is not our contract," protested a mystified John Conrad. "We —"

The Governor waved them from his presence.

"It is your contract. Think over your situation and return to-morrow."

That evening the older Germans talked earnestly in the Weiser house. They agreed to ask again that they be permitted to leave and that they be paid. But to resist they were helpless. Resistance, moreover, was wrong.

For a while Conrad listened; then he joined a score of young men who waited for him outside in the shadow.

"It is all for peace," said he. "I believe that Governor Hunter means to entrap them."

Quietly the young men slipped into the

darker woods. Into a little cave high above the river, Conrad crept on hands and knees. One by one he passed out a dozen guns. Though the leader of the enterprise was the youngest of all, his friends looked at him with admiration. In their admiration Conrad forgot his own somewhat troublesome conscience.

In the morning, John Conrad and his friends visited the Governor. They had, they said, considered their situation, and they were not satisfied.

The Governor looked over their heads in the direction of Albany.

"We do not wish to be undutiful," explained John Conrad. "What we ask is only justice. We did not promise to stay forever in a barren land." John Conrad's voice trembled as it had trembled in Gross Anspach when he spoke of the country which they had seen in their dreams. "We wish to go to Schoharie."

"Whether or not you 'wish to go to Schoharie,'" the Governor mocked them like a child, "you are to stay here." Now the Gov-

ernor stamped his foot. "Here is your land, here you are to live and die!"

The agent could not resist a temptation to add a word.

"You should be shot for your impertinence!"

Then the agent gave a wild scream. The punishment which he proposed so angrily seemed likely to be carried into effect upon himself. Upon the little house he saw an armed host approaching. Waiting for sound of strife, the young men had come to the defense of their elders.

"They will murder us!" screamed the agent.

Young Conrad stepped inside the door.

"We ask only —" Then Conrad paused. Neither the Governor nor the agent was listening to what he was saying. Even the eyes of his father, which had looked upon him with horrified amazement, were turned away. From the young men behind him came a loud warning to run, and he turned his head. Among the trees was a gleam of red and a glitter of steel. The agent's servant had

made a swift trip to the British garrison at Albany.

“Captain, collect these guns,” commanded the Governor. Then he turned to young Conrad. “Another stirring-up of rebellion and you will pay the penalty of a rebel.”

Now the Germans gave up their arms and went back to their work. Some of the trees were said to be fit for felling and a few kilns were constructed. In these the pine knots were first to be burned. To the task of gathering them the little children were appointed and Conrad was made their superintendent. The work was humiliating and he obeyed unwillingly. His father had said nothing to him of his rebellion, but he knew that it was constantly in John Conrad’s mind. The presence of the red-coated soldiers, who treated the whole settlement like dangerous criminals, was, John Conrad may have thought, reproach enough.

Now another winter came and passed, a winter of idleness and discontent for Conrad, of sadness for Margareta, and of great physical suffering for all. The miserable substi-

tutes for woolen clothes, the poor food, the bitter cold weakened their bodies and depressed their minds. No longer could Conrad enliven the camp with music, since his dear flute had to be exchanged for food. The Governor's agent now played upon it, but he played no German tunes. Barbara and Sabina grew as pale and thin as their older sister, whose hopes of seeing her lover had almost died. Once more as on shipboard John Conrad thought and spoke of the beauties of the heavenly country.

Presently John Conrad was served with an astonishing notice. The Germans might go! Hearts leaped; there were cries of joy. Then the hand which held the order began to tremble.

“We may go south or east, but not north or west. To Schoharie we dare not go. It is my opinion that this business of tar-making has failed. It cannot be that they will turn us adrift and yet forbid us that which is ours. God in heaven help us!”

To the confused and terrified settlement came another fearful threat. No longer, said

the Governor, would he feed women or children who had no men to repay him in labor. A few single men married at once their young countrywomen who were without support. Among them was John Conrad.

The summer passed in uncertainty. In September another notice came. The business of tar-making was for the present ended. The Germans would receive no more food, but must shift for themselves. With cruel thoroughness they were now abandoned.

“And we dare not go to Schoharie!” they cried. “Last week Kniskern tried to get away and the soldiers brought him back. We —”

Then upon the frightened assembly rushed young Conrad.

“The soldiers are gone!”

With one accord the council adjourned, running to the upper end of the settlement. The camp-ground was deserted.

Now it was proposed that the settlement should start as a body with the dawn. At this poor Margareta burst into tears. In the wilderness her young man could never find

her. It had been some small comfort to feel that at least he knew where she was.

But Margareta was to have a little longer to watch and wait. Once more the dissuading voice of John Conrad warned his companions.

“My friends! We do not know where this land is. A few chosen men must make their way thither in the two rude boats owned by the settlers, and consult with the Indians and return. At Albany we might find a guide. It is the only way.”

For hours the council sat in the Weiser house. It was agreed that seven men should start in the morning. Conrad sat listening, his eyes looking through the log walls, across the blue river, his heart longing to see once more those great warriors, his friends. When the council had adjourned, he caught his father by the arm.

“Oh, father, let me go, too!”

“We dare not take more than are necessary, lad.”

“I will be wise and patient, father.”

“You have yet to prove yourself to be so,

Conrad." John Conrad looked gravely into the beseeching eyes. "Your time of responsibility will come, lad; see that you are ready for it."

VIII

THE FLIGHT BEGINS

THOUGH Conrad was not allowed to go to Schoharie with his father and the other deputies, he was allowed to see them on their way. The evening following the council at which their plans were made, the moon rose late, a fact which suited their purposes.

"We can slip away in the darkness, and still have the moon to light our journey," said John Conrad. "It may be that they are watching us. There will be two boats, and these must be brought back, since we may find a shorter path through the forest when we return."

Conrad's blue eyes lifted to his father's in appeal.

"Let me go with you and bring the boats back. I can row well and I will be very careful."

John Conrad consulted with his friends.

When they said "yes," Conrad rushed to get ready.

The journey to Albany consumed three days. Here and there, where the banks of the river were low, the travelers saw fine farms which they longed to possess. They did not dare to stop, however, to inspect the land, since it seemed to them that they could hear on every breeze the sound of pursuers, bidding them return to the slavery which was worse than death. There were no villages and they passed but few boats. If they were hailed, Conrad answered in the best English he could muster.

Albany was only a small settlement, but here was stationed the garrison of soldiers from which the company had been sent to subdue the Germans, and therefore recognition and arrest were easily possible. The two boats were beached late in the afternoon below the town, and here the deputies hid until nightfall.

When darkness came Conrad, rowing one boat and towing the other, dropped quietly downstream with the current. In a thick

wood to which his father had pointed him on the upward journey, he stayed alone during the warm September night. He was tired, but it was a long time before he could go to sleep. He heard a gentle wind moving the treetops; he heard a twig snap near by, as though some wild creature were coming closer and closer with sinister intent. Several times he sprang to his feet. When the dim landscape appeared unchanged and without living inhabitants, he lay down once more.

Still he could not sleep. His thoughts traveled to Livingston Manor with its cruel disappointments, to the long ocean journey, to Blackheath, even to Gross Anspach. What vague, splendid dreams he had had of the future and of the new land! He had dreamed of becoming rich and powerful and important, and all he had succeeded in doing was gathering a few pine knots! Remembering that childish service, he laughed bitterly. If his father had given him his way he might have done better, but his father would not believe that he was a man. Then, before more dreary thoughts came to depress him, he fell asleep,

his head pillowed on his arm, his weary body finding the hard ground a downy bed.

Early in the morning he continued his journey down the river, his eyes watching carefully for enemies. But no emissaries of an angry Governor came to meet him. The Germans were, it was plainly evident, wholly abandoned to their misery. Past the tall cliffs, past the open farmlands, where some day would be pleasant villages and towns, he floated. He was hungry, but he had been hungry many times; he was tired, but he did not mind weariness.

At the settlement he found all as it had been. The soldiers had not returned and the agent had vanished. A hundred plans were being made for the journey into the wilderness. A few families announced that they would not go. The Governor would not forsake them utterly; if he did, they would rather seek for help among their fellow countrymen across the river than trust themselves to the forest.

In Albany, the deputies sought out quietly the German families whom they knew and

from their houses were able to make inquiries. That there was an Indian settlement of Schoharie was certain. There were at that time in Albany several Mohawk Indians from the neighborhood of Schenectady, another Indian village, who could answer questions. With one, whom the English called John Meyndert, the deputies talked before the day was over. With grunts and nods he promised to be their guide and interpreter, and in his canoe and the canoe of another Indian they traveled to Schenectady, where, after a night's rest, they started across a line of rough hills toward the southwest.

Of the beauties of the September woods the seven deputies saw nothing. With eyes fixed upon the man in front, each man walked doggedly and stubbornly on, determined not to yield to the fatigue which the rapid pace produced. Soft of tread and sure of foot John Meyndert stalked ahead as silent as the tree trunks among which he moved. An occasional "Ugh" when the slipping foot of one of the travelers threatened an ugly fall, or a shake of the head when some one pointed to a fruit or

berry which looked as though it were edible, formed his share of the conversation.

At last, at noon of a pleasant day, Meyndert halted his long stride and pointed downward. They had reached and crossed a rough elevation whose loose stones made it almost impossible to climb. Now, wearily, the deputies lifted their eyes toward Meyndert and followed his pointing finger.

It was John Conrad who cried out first.

"Oh, see!"

In a second the last of the party had come out on the little shelf of rock to which Meyndert had led them. Peter Kniskern pointed with a shaking hand.

"Schoharie?"

The Indian answered with a grin.

Then, for a long time, no one spoke a word, and no one moved except to wipe from his eyes the tears of which middle age had learned not to be ashamed.

The smiling valley lay before them, threaded through its broad plain with the river now in flood. Here where they stood the banks rose precipitously; yonder there

was a more gradual ascent; but on every side the broad valley was sheltered. The travelers looked their fill, then one by one gave judgment in slow sentences.

"Those are rich and fertile meadows."

"See this fine spring below us!"

"How quickly would fruit trees grow and vineyards cover the hillsides!"

"It is like" — the voice sank to a whisper — "it is like the valleys of Germany!"

As they descended the steep hill, Meyndert pointed out the Indian village at the far end of the valley. It was a time of year when food was abundant and the villages were comfortable. As the visitors approached, children dashed for cover in the neat wigwams set on each side of a narrow street, and women, busy with baking or weaving, looked up in amazement. Toward the tallest of the wigwams, Meyndert led his company. In its doorway sat two Indians smoking, at sight of whom he called a loud "Ho!" For a while the three talked together while the Germans waited, aware from Meyndert's gestures that he was telling their errand. Presently, in response to

a shout, several Indian women brought bearskins and deerskins from the wigwam and spread them down under a great tree. Thither the Germans were led, and there they and the three Indians sat down.

At once Meyndert pointed to one of his hosts, enormous of body and painted with snakes and arrows. He called him, as nearly as the Germans could understand, "Quagnant." Quagnant came, so Meyndert indicated by broken sentences and gestures, from a valley beyond. He was a chief over the Indians in this valley as well as his own. He delivered now a long speech, whose meaning Meyndert made fairly clear. He spoke very formally and solemnly after the manner of the Indian people. He and his friends would be glad to have the strangers come among them. He had heard of the wonderful journey of the King of Rivers and other great chiefs who were overlords in the Five Nations, but he did not know what had befallen them or whether they had returned, since they lived far, far to the west. He was sorry that these new brethren had been so afflicted. Here they might have,

if they wished, a peaceful haven. His people would help them with food and skins and show them how to build their houses.

Having finished his speech to the happy Germans, Quagnant commanded that a feast be made. Together all ate solemnly of Indian bread and smoked meat, and took great whiffs from a long pipe lighted and passed by Quagnant. Then, supplied with food for the journey and with light hearts, the Germans started for Schenectady.

From Schenectady to Albany the Indians took the travelers in their canoes, then the Germans set out on foot, keeping as near the river as possible. They had traveled for a day when they heard a shout, and looking down saw two rowboats, one containing a passenger, the other towed. With an answering shout they descended the rocky bank to the shore.

"I have been watching and watching," cried Conrad. "Have you been to Schoharie? What did you find? Did you see our friends?"

When a score of questions had tumbled out one after the other, the deputies began to

answer. Schoharie was beautiful and fertile beyond all their dreams. The Indians were not only willing to let them have the land, but offered to help them. They had seen nothing of the King of Rivers, but had heard of him.

"They have houses of bark in which they seem to be comfortable, but better houses can easily be made."

"They are satisfied with what they have; therefore Fate has no power over them. If their property is destroyed, they have a great storehouse to draw from for more."

"They made a feast for us and gave us food."

Conrad's blue eyes sought his father's.

"When will we start?"

For an instant John Conrad rowed in silence. His plans would not suit Conrad, the lad who was so young and who thought himself so old, who felt that so little time was still his, and who had a lifetime before him.

"Some will start at once, Conrad. But we will stay in Schenectady until the winter is over. There I have made arrangements with

John Meyndert to keep us, and there we will try to earn a little."

Conrad made no answer. He had already seen himself the first of the pilgrims to burst into the quiet valley.

"We shall find peace at last," went on John Conrad. "This Quagnant said no one should molest us, that the land is ours."

In a few days twenty families started for Schoharie. It was late October and already there had been sharp frost. The journey must be made slowly, since there were little children and ailing women in the party. A few had boats for the first part of the way and the others walked along the river-bank, the rustling leaves beneath their feet giving warning of the winter which was rapidly approaching. Hope minimized the dangers and smoothed the rough path.

A little later the Weisers started for Schenectady. Magdalena, like Catrina in Gross Anspach, feared the journey for her baby, and with her husband crossed the river to the older German settlement on the other side. Like Catrina, she wept bitterly.

When bundles had been packed by a silent, pale Margareta, when John Conrad had already lifted his pack to his shoulder, Fate, which had played the Weisers many cruel tricks, became suddenly friendly. A row-boat grounded on the little beach and a young man sprang out and hailed John Conrad, who stared at him without answering. But the young man did not wait for John Conrad's slow mental processes; he hurried toward the pale girl who gazed as though she saw a ghost. A single joyful "Margareta!" made clear to the settlement that Margareta's prayers had been answered.

Now the starting must be delayed another day. Across the river rowed Conrad to bring Magdalena and her husband and the preacher back with him; about the reunited lovers sat all the Germans. Young Baer had a good place and he had built a little house. He had written many times, though no letter had come from Margareta.

"It was the wicked agent who kept the letters," said Margareta. "God be thanked we are free from him!"

Best of all, young Baer had seen Christopher and George Frederick who lived not far away.

"They are well cared for and happy, and they look for their sister. Peter Zenger, who lives near by, watches for her also."

At this all the tender-hearted Germans wept once more. The parting from Margareta was lightened by the expectation that they would meet again. Once more the star of hope shone brightly.

In the lodge of John Meyndert the Weisers settled themselves in November. It was not clean, but they could endure discomfort a little longer. The chief difficulty was the drunkenness of Meyndert, who had learned the white man's evil habit.

From Meyndert John Conrad and his son tried, in the long, idle hours, to learn the Indian language. They hunted eagerly for work in the settlement, but there was no work to be had. With thankfulness John Conrad accepted the offer of an Englishwoman to take Sabina into service. The Indian lodge was not a suitable home for either her or little

Barbara. At restless, unhappy Conrad his father looked uneasily. Even the village of Schenectady offered mischief to idle hands.

"You could teach the little children, lad," said he.

"I want a man's work," answered Conrad sullenly.

Then, as in the London fog, Conrad had a strange experience.

There was fog, also, here by the Mohawk River, by which he walked early one November morning. Again he went with head bent, kicking the leaves and pebbles before him. Again he felt that stubborn head strike an obstacle and himself fly backward. When, in amazement, he picked himself up, he was confounded. There was no obstacle before him. There was neither tree nor rock. Puzzled and alarmed, he turned toward the settlement. Presently he looked back. By this time the mist had lifted, and behind him he saw a gigantic Indian. Conrad stopped as though his feet were weighted and the great body, wrapped in a bright new blanket, bore down upon him. The Indian grunted his queer

"Ho, Ho," and motioned Conrad to lead the way. That he had no unkindly intention was made clear by the smile which his little trick brought to his face.

At the first flat rock to which they came he bade Conrad sit down. He drew from the bundle which he carried on his shoulders a loaf of Indian bread and broke off a large piece.

"Eat," said he in the Mohawk language. "Who are you?"

"I am John Conrad Weiser's son Conrad," answered Conrad, thankful for each moment spent in learning the rudiments of John Meyndert's language.

"To Weiser we gave a gift. Why does he not come to take it?" This was the meaning of the next sentence as nearly as Conrad could guess.

"He will come in the springtime."

"And you?" The Indian looked earnestly into Conrad's blue eyes, as though astonished at their vivid color.

"Oh, yes!" cried Conrad.

The Indian said no more, but rose and

walked toward the settlement, motioning Conrad to follow. His long stride soon left Conrad far behind and Conrad started to run, to find a grinning Indian waiting for him behind a tree, or calling to him from the rear. Presently, when the Indian's ruse brought them face to face, Conrad pointed to himself.

"I am Conrad," said he. "Who are you?"

"Quagnant," was the answer.

He it was who had given the Germans their hearty welcome!

When they entered the settlement, Conrad would have liked to follow the chief as he went from Indian house to Indian house, but he did not dare.

To Meyndert's lodge Quagnant came late in the afternoon, and there sat himself down on a pile of deerskins near the fire. He had come, he said, to hold a conversation with the white chief. At a sign from her husband, John Meyndert's squaw rose and went away, beckoning John Conrad's family to follow. For an instant Conrad thought that he was to remain. Then Quagnant, hitherto so kind, pointed to him, and Meyndert bade him go

also. Offended, Conrad did not return till hunger drove him back after dark.

Then the family, except John Conrad, were asleep; as Conrad lifted the curtain of skins which hung across the door, his father rose from beside the dying fire and led him outside. In the starlight he walked up and down with his hand on his boy's shoulder.

"Conrad, I have an offer to set before you. I have kept you with me, both because I could not find any opening for you and because I could not bear to let you go. This Indian Quagnant has asked me to let you go with him to his village, there to 'learn to be a man,' as he puts it. He means that they will teach you how to hunt and trap and how to make a home in the wilderness. Would you like to enter on this strange apprenticeship?"

Conrad's full heart breathed a great sigh.

"Yes, father."

"You cannot come back until spring. The training in Indian ways may be very irksome."

"Not as irksome as idleness."

For an hour father and son talked, entering once more upon the future with a tender recalling of the past. Then they went to bed.

In the misty morning Conrad started away, a little bundle on his back. He kissed the sleeping Barbara, he put both arms about his father's neck, then he followed the tall Indian who walked before him, silent, mysterious, his tall figure dim in the fog.

They crossed the wet meadow and walked for an hour by the stream-side, then Quagnant turned into the forest. They ascended a rocky hill, they followed a narrow valley, they climbed another hill. When the sun was high in the sky, they ate a lunch of corn bread and dried fish from Quagnant's pack. Then, already footsore and stiff, Conrad followed doggedly the long stride which led farther and farther into the wilderness.

IX

THE DARK FOREST

AT nightfall the travelers camped in the shelter of a huge boulder. Quagnant made a fire by rubbing two sticks together; then he spread the embers about and started other fires close to the face of the rock. When they had burned themselves out, he bade Conrad lie down on the warmed ground. Faintly aware that Quagnant went on with some other device for making him comfortable, Conrad slept.

In the morning he found that he lay in a tent formed by the boughs of evergreens and that he was still comfortably warm. Quagnant had shot a bird which he was roasting over the fire. When it was eaten and the fire was tramped out, Quagnant shouldered his pack. He looked up at the sky, shook his head, and started briskly away.

Until noon Quagnant led the way across rough hills and through narrow valleys.

While they ate their lunch, the snow began to fall and Quagnant grunted his annoyance. Soon the rocks were slippery and the trail hard to find. There were other hills and other valleys and another exhausted sleep at night.

On the third day, Conrad was certain that he could not rise. Quagnant helped him up and many times in the morning slackened his pace or stopped entirely. In the afternoon he stopped short and bade Conrad look ahead. They had come round the shoulder of a hill and were looking into a broad valley. Here there had been no snow and the meadows were green. Through the center of the valley ran a stream, broad and full and smoothly flowing.

"I see people!" cried Conrad. "They are building houses!"

Suddenly Conrad's heart throbbed against his side.

"Schoharie!" he cried. "Is this Schoharie?"

Quagnant grinned.

"Schoharie," he repeated.

Conrad tried to wave his hand, but could

make only a feeble motion. He began to talk in a queer, uncertain way, and Quagnant, looking at him uneasily, took him by the arm, and presently lifted him to his back. On he went until at dusk he stepped into a path worn into a deep rut. Ahead were lights and the sound of voices.

When Conrad was allowed to slip from the broad back to a soft pile of deerskins, he felt that all the comforts he had ever known were combined in one delicious sensation. That Schoharie lay far behind him he did not know: that the faces about him were dark, the voices strange, — all were matters of indifference. He felt the rim of a warm cup against his lips, then he fell asleep.

The sun had been long in the sky when he woke. He was in an oblong house of bark. Through a hole in the roof the sun streamed upon the ashes of a fire. On the walls hung guns and bows and arrows and strange long spears and about were piles of furs, on one of which lay a little case of bark from which there issued the scream of a hungry baby.

At once a young woman lifted the curtain

at the door. Before taking her baby, she looked at Conrad, and finding him awake, nodded and smiled. In a moment she brought a wooden bowl filled with broth. Conrad drained the bowl and lay back once more.

When, late in the afternoon, he lifted the curtain, he found himself in a village of bark houses. At the far end of the single street children were playing, and from the ashes of a fire a woman was taking a loaf of Indian bread. She gave a little call and at once other women appeared and the children came closer.

"Where is Quagnant?" asked Conrad.

The women imitated the sighting of a gun and pointed to their mouths. The children, dressed in little coats and leggings of leather, pointed with amazement to Conrad's fair skin and then at their own dark cheeks. Finally one came close to him.

"Eyes-like-the-Sky," said he, and his companions repeated the strange name.

It was repeated again when the hunters returned with deer meat, and there seemed to be general satisfaction with the discernment

of the little boy whose own name was Young Deer.

At once the women prepared the feast. Portions of the meat were set aside to be smoked; the rest was divided into slices and broiled. There was no seasoning and the Indian bread was coarse, but the meal was better than many which the guest had eaten.

For a few days Conrad watched the play of the children, who showed him haunts of beaver and woodchuck, and taught him to make and spin a heart-shaped top of wood. With them he played Blind Man's Buff, in which the bandage across his eyes was his own dullness of vision which could not see the little figure lying among the leaves. He watched also the women braiding their baskets and grinding earth into the paint for the faces and bodies of their husbands.

In the evening he sat with the Indians in Quagnant's house. At first their speech was a strange jargon, but gradually the sounds stayed in his mind and were associated with the objects to which they belonged. The comfortable nights in the chief's wigwam and

the good food put color into his cheeks and flesh on his thin body.

But idleness and luxury did not long endure. He had come to look upon the deerskins which served him for a bed as his own. One night, when he wished to lie down, they were gone. He asked for them and was laughed at.

"You have no deerskin," said Quagnant.

In the morning Quagnant gave him a gun and led the way into the forest. Three days later when they returned, Quagnant had two deerskins and Conrad none. Again he slept on the ground and again he went with Quagnant into the forest. On the third journey he shot a buck.

For one night after the skin was dressed, he slept upon it in the chief's house. At the next nightfall he found himself and his bed thrust outside. The Indians laughed at his astonishment and every laugh said, "Make a house for yourself!"

With the advice and aid of the children, Conrad built himself a wigwam. At once Quagnant demolished it.

"Wind come — house gone. Eyes-like-the-Sky can do better."

When his house was finished to Quagnant's satisfaction, Conrad had a few days of peace. Then for a day he was allowed no food; then for two days; then for three. He was taken to a distant point in the forest and required to find his way home. One bitter day he was dropped into a deep, icy pond in a near-by stream.

As he understood more of the language, he listened earnestly to the talk of the older Indians. Through all ran the consciousness of danger, — distant, perhaps, but real. Sometimes messengers from other tribes appeared suddenly in the village. Painted, armed, terrible, they talked always of the bow and the string, the long line of the French whom they called Onotio, and the shorter line of English whom they called Onas.

"Upon Onas Onotio will make war. When we walk in the forest we hear it shouted by the trees. We will all ally ourselves with Onas."

When there came to the village those who

would exterminate all pale-faces, Quagnant hurried Conrad out of the way. In January five great chiefs came to visit Quagnant. Conrad gazed at them earnestly, hoping to see the King of Rivers. They looked back at him scowling and muttering, and Conrad retreated to his wigwam.

The chiefs went to Quagnant's house, and before them the women placed broiled venison and wild turkey. Afterwards long pipes were solemnly smoked. Then Quagnant gave a command to Little Squaw into whose eyes came a frightened look. Quagnant saw her hesitate.

"Go!" he shouted.

Hidden away in the cache of Quagnant, where there was now little else, there were a few black bottles, paid to him in return for many beautiful skins carried to Schenectady. Little Squaw fetched them as she was bidden.

In the middle of the night Conrad heard the sound of carousing and looked out. The fire-water had done its evil work, and the Indians sought some victim upon whom to spend their

madness. There was a flash of steel and past Conrad's head flew a sharp axe. Other weapons flashed in the moonlight. Terrified, without blanket or other extra covering, Conrad fled into the forest.

Two days later in a blinding snowstorm he ventured to return. Whether Quagnant remembered his behavior it was difficult to tell. His visitors had gone, and he sat, sullen and miserable, beside the fire in the wigwam, making no answer to the complaints of Little Squaw.

"The cache is almost empty," said she. "All the summer I labored and now you have given large presents to the Oneidas. I saw them go heavily laden. Now we will have a great storm when no hunting can be done."

The first day of the snowstorm Conrad spent in repairing the damage to his wigwam. He thought of his father and his brothers and sisters, and wondered once more, in deep depression, to what goal his wanderings would bring him. At nightfall he ate the last of his food.

It was still dark when he woke in the morn-

ing; at least no light came through the chinks of the wigwam or through the opening at the top. Stiff and sore, he turned and slept. When he woke again, he sprang up and went to lift the curtain at the door. To his amazement he looked into darkness. When he thrust out his hand he discovered that it was not night which surrounded him, but a wall of snow, higher than the wigwam.

He was not at first alarmed. He had heard more than one story of imprisonment for days while the great snows fell. The snow was porous, and the wigwams, thus blanketed, were warm. He had, it was true, no food, but he could go without food for a day or two. He was still not thoroughly rested and he would sleep.

He was wakened by what sounded like the report of a gun. His heart failed. Perhaps Quagnant's friends had come back and were prepared to finish the work which they had threatened! Again there came the sharp explosion. Now Conrad remembered the cold nights of the great frost in Gross Anspach when the trees had cracked like pistols. The

snow must have ceased to fall and rescue would soon come.

In the morning his mind was not clear. He heard a whistling sound in the top of the wigwam and saw a pale light filtering in. Deep drifts must be forming.

"It will be best to stay here," said he heavily.

As the hours passed he fell into a stupor. The wind died, the light of sunset showed for a few minutes in a yellow haze at the top of the wigwam, and once more through the long night the trees cracked like pistols.

Quagnant and his squaw and their large brood got comfortably through the three days of imprisonment. Quagnant grew mild and peaceable; he told stories to the children and obeyed his wife. But when she ordered him to go and dig Conrad out, he sent several young Indians in his place. The recollection of the flying hatchet disturbed him.

"I will drink no more fire-water," he promised himself solemnly.

Run-as-the-Wind and Turkey Feather and Young Deer all worked diligently with the

hoses which they borrowed from their mothers. As they approached the door of the wigwam they cried, —

“Eyes-like-the-Sky! Wake up! Wake up!”

When there was no answer they worked faster.

“Perhaps Eyes-like-the-Sky had no food!”

“A bear might have devoured him as he slept!”

“He is brave; he would kill the bear.”

When they had reached the door of the wigwam and still Conrad did not answer, the rescuing party grew very quiet. Little Squaw was the first to thrust her head through the hole which the boys made.

“He lies here like the snow itself! Quick! some hot broth from Quagnant’s kettle!”

With a wooden spoon she forced a few drops through Conrad’s lips, then a little more. Then she sent Turkey Feather to Quagnant.

“Tell Quagnant a good bed is to be made by the fire. Tell him Little Squaw sends him this and this.” And Little Squaw picked up the hatchets of Quagnant and his friends.

That night the Mohawk village feasted again. Relieved by the ending of the storm and the restoration of Conrad, the squaws forgot the alarming emptiness of each family cache.

The snow thawed little by little. When a crust formed, it was not thick enough to bear the weight of the hunters. Food grew more scarce and the usual two meals a day dwindled to one. Another heavy snow made hunting impossible. More sullen grew the warriors, more angry the squaws, more miserable the little children.

After the second great snow a crust formed and Quagnant started at once into the forest, taking Conrad with him. The two crossed the hill which lay toward the west and followed the next valley to the north. It was bitterly cold; insufficiently clad and weak from lack of food, Conrad trudged along, his heart heavy, his mind dull. To him now the new country was a trap in which all the Germans would be finally lost. Quagnant did not speak except to give sullen orders. At nightfall the two camped supperless and without

shelter. There was now no warming of a bed, since the wood lay deep under the snow.

When the two took up their weary journey, it seemed to Conrad that Quagnant tried deliberately to court death. He climbed another western hill, and his voice became more gruff. Was it possible that he meant to lead Conrad far away and desert him? Then there would be one less mouth in the Indian village.

The sun was high when they came to the top of the hill. Another valley lay before them with a swift, dark stream flowing through its center. Another hill rose opposite. Conrad wondered drearily whether his numb feet must climb that also.

"I wish that the end would come soon," said he bitterly. "I wish —"

Walking heedlessly as he had walked on the Schenectady meadow, Conrad came with a thump into the same obstacle. Before him Quagnant had stopped rigid. Terrified, Conrad looked up. Quagnant was staring down into the valley, where along the stream beside a deep pool a small herd of deer nibbled the

green laurel leaves. They were almost motionless and they were within easy shot.

Quagnant pulled the trigger and a deer dropped. His comrades lifted their heads, but before they could dash away in terror another fell. The flight of the remainder soon ended. Before them the stream plunged over a precipice; on both sides the icy walls rose steeply. A third and a fourth fell before Quagnant's accurate shots. There was a glow on his dark cheeks, a fire in his black eyes. He took a step to one side and pulled the trigger again.

Then, in spite of the silence to which he had been trained, Quagnant gave a fierce yell. He had gone a little too near the edge of the steep slope. His feet slipped as the gun recoiled and he slid, making frantic efforts to regain his footing.

But his efforts were vain. With increasing speed he coasted down the hillside, his course leading straight toward the rocky wall which dropped abruptly for at least fifty feet. It was as though an insect should slip down the side of a cup with sure drowning in the bot-

tom. Then, near the brink of the pool, a bush caught the pack on his shoulders and held him suspended.

Now Quagnant was silent. The deer thongs which bound the pack were strong, but his body was heavy. He could see below him the black pool. In its icy water he might keep himself afloat for a few seconds, but to climb out would be impossible. Across the stream he could see the bodies of the slain deer, food for all his people, and he could hear the snow crust breaking as the others made their escape. Conrad, far above him in safety, he could not see.

Quagnant shut his eyes and listened to the gurgle of the water and looked into his poor Indian soul. The logic of the case was simple. He could not move without help, and Conrad would not help him. He had abused the pale-face and the pale-face would certainly desert him. Even if there were mercy in his heart, Conrad could not come down the hill without risking his life nor return to the village for help before Quagnant would die of cold.

Then Quagnant heard above the gurgle of

the water a strange sound as though some one were following his wild flight. There was the sound of sliding feet, then silence, then again the sound of sliding feet. Presently began a sharp chip, chip, as though the ice were being struck with a hatchet. Quagnant, with eyes still closed, began to address the Great Spirit.

"I pray that I may not be cut off from my present life, Great and Good Spirit."

Nearer and nearer came the sound of chipping; higher and higher rose the hopes of Quagnant. It would be fearful, indeed, to slip over the precipice with rescue at hand! But was it rescue? Quagnant remembered again with sickening pain the sharp hatchet hurled at Conrad. It was that very hatchet which Conrad held in his hand!

Now Quagnant could feel each stroke on the ice. They were near his head — he gave himself up. They had passed his head and were even with his waist — he dared to breathe again. When the chipping had sounded for a long time beside his foot, he felt a hand touch his foot and move it to a hole in the ice in which it could find support. Thus

aided, he was able to lift his arms and draw himself up beside the little bush. Near by, supporting himself by a tree, sat Conrad.

With immobile countenance and without even his customary grunt, Quagnant climbed the mountain in the tracks which Conrad had made. After he had rested for a few minutes and had ceased to tremble, he walked along the ridge until he found an easy descent to the stream and to the carcasses of the deer. He did not speak until he had dressed a portion of the meat with his long knife and cooked it over a little fire of driftwood which had been carried high on the bank where it had been protected by thick laurel and hemlock shrubbery. This he would not touch until Conrad had eaten. Then at last he spoke.

"A cloud had come between us, Conrad, and the skies were dark. It is past now forever and the skies are clear."

Hiding in the stream, away from the sharp claws of panther or wildcat, the meat which they could not carry, the two set out for home. The next day the hunters brought in, not only Quagnant's kill, but three more deer. That

evening Conrad was invited to the feast of the grown men and was given a long pipe. He did not like the strong tobacco, but he did his best to smoke, aware that he had been paid a great honor. At him Quagnant looked solemnly, both during the feast and afterwards when they sat together by the fire. In Quagnant's mind was taking shape a strange plan, at once brilliant and cunning. If Conrad could have looked into the chief's mind and could have seen there, slowly forming, the last episode in his strange apprenticeship, he might well have been terrified. The meeting in the London fog was about to bear its fruit.

At last the sullen winter was past and the trees began to bud and the meadows to grow green. The women prepared their little patches of ground for maize and potatoes, old canoes were mended and new canoes were built, the young men began to court and the maidens to grow more shy. When Conrad spoke of joining his father, who must be by this time in Schoharie, Quagnant shook his head.

"You have been with us through the cruel

winter: you cannot leave when the Great Spirit is making all things beautiful.”

Now dark forms glided through the forest once more, as though there were perpetual patrol in its dim aisles. Messengers came to the village, messengers were sent away. The Mohawks spoke of their country as the Long House whose back was at the Hudson River and whose door was Niagara. In the spring weather all the inhabitants were astir.

One morning, at dawn, Conrad felt a touch on his shoulder and sprang up as he had been trained. Quagnant stood before him, enormous in the pale light. In his hand he held a new suit of doeskin and a bowl of the red paint with which his tribe painted stars and turtles on their cheeks. With a few strokes he decorated Conrad's tanned face. Together they ate and upon the shoulder of each Little Squaw fastened a pack of food and a blanket.

“Where are we going?” asked Conrad.

Quagnant made no answer except to motion Conrad to follow him through the village. There, with his long stride, Quagnant took up the trail toward the southwest.

X

JOURNEY'S END

IT would be difficult to tell which fared the worse during the long winter, the Germans who had forced their way to the Schoharie Valley in November, or those who remained, like John Conrad, in the settlements. All were poor, all were ill-clad, all were insufficiently fed. The cruel winter continued the weeding-out of the weak. At Schoharie the Indians helped the newcomers according to their promise, and what food and furs they could spare they gave cheerfully.

In March, John Conrad and all those who had remained started to Schoharie. There were indications of an early spring, and it was important that crops should be sown. From Conrad nothing had been heard and his father grew daily more anxious. Sabina, like Margareta and Magdalena, had found a mate, and Barbara had taken her place with the kind Englishwoman.

No sooner had the journey begun than the last of the winter's storms was upon the little party. Little children died and grown persons suffered cruelly. Joined with their friends at Schoharie in the valley of their dreams, the pilgrims waited, with what patience they could summon, for spring.

When, finally, the snow had melted for the last time and the meadows were growing green and the willows were yellow along the river, the hearts of the Germans rested at last. The lovely valley was lovelier than their dreams. Log houses were built, farms were laid out, and with their poor tools they prepared to create a German valley which should bloom like the rose.

Still no word of Conrad was to be had. He was in the village of Quagnant to the west — that the Indians knew, but they could tell no more. His father grew more and more anxious and unhappy. As he worked the soil, he lifted his head to watch; when his day's work was done, he walked into the forest toward the west.

Meanwhile, as Conrad followed the long

stride of Quagnant through the budding forest, he remembered the weary journey in November from Schenectady to the Indian village. Then he had nearly perished with exhaustion; now he walked without weariness. Quagnant remembered also and commented approvingly.

"Eyes-like-the-Sky does not stumble or faint. He is a true Indian."

"This is a smooth trail."

In Indian fashion Quagnant made a comparison.

"That was a smooth trail, but to Eyes-like-the-Sky it was unfamiliar. The heart of the Indian seemed also strange to you, but now it is plain."

As the two sat by a little camp-fire in the cool evenings, Quagnant looked solemnly at Conrad. They had now many companions; tall chiefs wrapped in blankets and stalking solemnly, young men heavily armed and thickly painted. The strangers stared at Conrad in amazement, their keen eyes piercing the thick layer of paint with which his cheeks were covered. When Conrad glanced back at

them, they looked at his eyes and shook their heads. They talked with Quagnant of the Long House, of distant enemies whom they called the Lenape, and of other matters which Conrad did not understand. It was clearly evident that Conrad's presence startled and shocked them.

Presently Quagnant grew communicative. One evening when he and Conrad camped alone, he told him something of the affairs of the Indians.

"The Five Nations are at peace, but they will not always be at peace. Many important things are coming to pass, Conrad."

It was in the middle of a bright May morning that Quagnant and his companion reached the end of their journey. The trail led over the last stream, through the last wood and thence to a great hill, upon whose side lay a large Indian village. Here it was that the hundreds of small human streams had converged; here the savages were gathered, it seemed to Conrad, in an innumerable host. At sight of them, his heart throbbed and his skin pricked with fright. Quagnant's face

was hideous, and here Quagnant was repeated hundreds of times. Quagnant's great body, crowned with its bristling eagle feathers, was a bit terrifying even to Conrad, and here was Quagnant's fierce strength multiplied by a great army. There were Indians wrapped in blankets, Indians without covering, Indians with hideous nose-rings, and here and there shamans or medicine men with masks of animals, as though the very beasts of the forest had come to join the council.

When strength returned to Conrad's frightened heart, he breathed a frantic prayer to be allowed to escape. For such a scene as this no experience of his life had prepared him. But he dared not show a sign of fear; he must walk on behind Quagnant, up the street of the village between the gigantic creatures and before the black, beady, piercing eyes. As Quagnant approached, he was hailed with many a loud "Ho, Ho." The sound which followed him was different, — a low, disapproving murmur.

Straight up the great hill led the feet of Quagnant; close to him followed Conrad. At

the summit of the hill the forest trees had been cut in a wide circle and the ground had been beaten like a hard floor. About the rim of the circle were placed tree-stumps and logs; in the middle burned a fire, round which crouched shamans, more hideous than the warriors. Beside them lay their drums of tightly stretched skin and their rattles of turtle shell or gourd. They sat motionless, their eyes upon the fire.

Quagnant bade Conrad sit down at the edge of the woods, and himself sat beside him. One by one Indians came to speak to him, to Conrad a consoling sign of his importance. Longest of all he spoke with an Oneida chief named Shikellamy. What they said Conrad could not hear, but he could see that Shikellamy looked upon him kindly.

"He has a great heart and a wise mind," said Quagnant as the chief went away. "In council he makes our way clear."

At noon the shamans beat their drums and shook their rattles, and at once, breaking off conversation with one another or with the squaws of the village, the Indians approached

the council fire. Certain ones, Quagnant and Shikellamy among them, took seats together on the tree-stumps; the others sat on logs or on the ground. Outside the circle stood scores of young men. Presently the shamans ceased to beat their drums and shake their rattles and crouched again about the fire.

Now followed a period of complete silence. The chiefs did not move; the young warriors seemed scarcely to breathe; even from the village came no sound of speech and no cry of child.

Shikellamy was the first to rise. He spoke in a deep voice and was listened to with breathless attention.

"Brothers of the Long House, it is now many years since the great tree was planted under whose young roots we buried our hatchets. Many moons have risen and waned since we wove our wampum into one belt. Many feasts have been eaten since the undying flame of our council fire was lighted, and since Mohawk, Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida, and Cayuga became brothers. The great tree will continue to grow, the sun and moon to

rise and the council fire to send out into the forest its clear light. Our hatchets, buried in the ground, will rust before they are dug up.

"We are now at peace with all men, and strangers seek our favor. Our enemies fear us and we fear no one.

"But, brothers of the Long House, there are matters to be considered. Claims have been laid against us. Our young men, in the heat of anger and inflamed by drink, have done here and there a little injury. The tears of those whom they injured must be wiped away with presents. Each wrong must be considered and we must make recompense without grudging.

"These matters are, however, small. Our brother Onotio has something to say to us. Our brother Onas has also something to say to us. Between Onotio on the one side and Onas on the other, there is undying hatred, whose cause is shut off from our eyes. We cannot remain friends both to Onotio and to Onas, who draw nearer and nearer to one another through the forests. Soon the two black

clouds will meet, and the grass on the war-path will be trodden down.

"It is for the consideration of these matters that the council is assembled."

When Shikellamy had finished a loud uproar was made by the medicine men. They rose and faced the east, then prostrated themselves again and again. The Great Spirit was being invoked.

Now with astonishing order the various businesses of which Shikellamy had spoken were presented to the council and settled. The young Indians who had quarreled with their neighbors were admonished and fined. Young Eagle was to send five deerskins to dry the tears of the warrior whose son he had injured; Short Arm was to send three blankets to the widow of the man whom he had killed. Against these decisions there was no protest. The code which the young men had disobeyed was clearly understood and its penalties accepted without argument.

When the relations of the allied nations to the French and English came to be spoken of, there was a change in the spirit of the meet-

ing. Now all whispering ceased; every one sat motionless, listening with knitted brows and bright, eager eyes. The council was informed minutely of the affairs of the English colonies to the east and the French settlements to the west. Conrad listened as eagerly as the rest, his terror lost in amazement.

"I am a swift runner," said Short Arm. "I went in three days to Harris's Ferry. The children of Brother Onas are creeping, creeping to the west and to the north. They are coming into the Long House. They are grazing their cattle where our deer have grazed. They are our enemies."

"The pale-faces are in Schoharie," said a dark-faced, hideously painted old chief. As he spoke he pointed at Conrad. "Not only are they given lands, but they are taken into our wigwams. They are our enemies."

From some one came a sneering laugh. Now Conrad was sure of what would be his fate. Then, on the opposite side of the council fire, a tall figure rose. Conrad's lips parted; he was about to cry out; then he held his lips closely shut with his hand.

"It is the King of Rivers! It is the King of Rivers!"

"This talk about the children of Onas is nonsense. The children of Onotio are more hateful. They come into the Long House from the north. They think nothing of their promises. They have allied themselves with our enemies; they are our enemies. There are no two words about them."

Now Quagnant rose, and standing with folded arms looked about until he had met every piercing eye. Last of all he sought the wide blue ones at the edge of the forest. Like the other Indians, Quagnant spoke eloquently.

"Brothers, we are of the extended lodge. The Long House is no mere hut like the dwelling of the Catawbias. We have made our enemies to flutter like frightened young birds. At the Catawbias and the Lenape we laugh.

"Now strangers seek to live with us in the Long House, — a great people, pale of face, with new customs and long guns. Some are our friends, some are our enemies. They have

brought us good things and bad things. With the guns they have brought we have become powerful, but with the fire-water they have brought we have become mad.

"We cannot tell which among these pale-faces are our friends. Their words are not ours and their faces are not ours. They give little in exchange for much. Our furs are to them no more valuable than a few beads, our hunting-grounds no more than a few hatchets."

"It is a good day's journey from the Susquehanna to the Black Mountain," cried a voice. "This they have taken for a piece of bright cloth and a glass in which to see one's face!"

"Their traders lie to us!" cried another.

The hideously painted old chief rose.

"Year by year their ships come. They overrun our land, given by the Great Spirit. They enter at the front of the Long House to shove us out at the back; at the back, to push us out at the front. I counsel death to all!"

A great trembling seized upon Conrad. Then he saw that Quagnant still stood, mo-

tionless, waiting to continue his speech. Quagnant would not forget the icy bank and the deep pool!

"Brothers," said Quagnant, "let us be orderly in council, not like chattering birds. The words of Quagnant were not finished."

At once silence was restored.

"The various brothers have spoken," went on Quagnant. "Many have spoken without thought. They desire war, without reflecting that the pale-face has long guns also, without reflecting that ships will bring new pale-faces. There is a pale-face to whom I have put many questions; he tells me that they are across the sea like the leaves of the forest. To talk of making war upon all is child's talk.

"What we should do, brothers of the Long House, is to enter into understanding with the pale-face, so that we may say, 'To this river the land is yours, beyond is ours.' Then our mind will be clear to them, then messengers can go to and fro and —"

"They will not listen!" cried the old warrior. "They have laughed our messengers in the face."

Quagnant waited again until the old warrior had been frowned at by half the assemblage. Quagnant approached now the carefully planned climax of his address.

"The pale-faces will not listen to us, it is true. They do not understand us. But they will listen to another pale-face. I have had in my wigwam a young pale-face. I have watched his behavior. He has done things which will move the hearts of the brothers of the Long House when I tell them. I will tell them at length. We have made of him an Indian. He speaks our words. He —"

Now the fierce old warrior would not be stayed. He sprang to his feet, hatchet in hand.

"He may well speak our words when he sits at our councils! Such a thing has never been heard of in the Long House. Let him go away and go quickly."

Shikellamy crossed the open space toward Quagnant.

"Let the young braves take him away," said he.

At once Conrad found himself surrounded.

Down the hillside he was led and to the far end of a long meadow through which flowed a stream.

There, when the curiosity of the young Indians about what was going on in the council could be no longer resisted, he was left alone. He could hear on the rising wind the sound of many voices and now a single voice raised in impassioned speech. About him the shades of the spring night were falling and a cold breath from the water chilled him through. Hungry and tired, he sat with his hands clasped round his knees and his cheek bent upon them. The forest seemed to press upon him. A more terrible oppression came from the thought of the savage creatures on the hillside, gathered from the wilderness, debating now whether to deal with the whites in peace or to exterminate them with knife and flame.

He thought of his father's dreams of a great country where there should be liberty and peace. With honesty and at the same time with firmness must these children of the wilderness be met or dreams and their dreamers would perish in a night.

Presently a dark form stole toward him across the meadow. He heard a strange singing unlike the voice of man or animal. He saw strange forms approach, with faces masked and bodies wrapped in skins of deer and panther and bear. He moved to the nearest tree and stood with his back against it. He thought now no more of his father's dreams, or of God's purpose of which his father talked, but prayed in his pious German way that he might meet his death bravely.

He found himself taken by the hand and led up the hill, the strange forms following after. Through the Indian village where the women stared from firelit doorways, and where over great fires meat was cooking, to the center of the council he was taken, and there he was placed alone beside the council fire. About sat the chiefs, behind them in the shadowy circle the young men. Conrad stood still, his eyes seeking Quagnant. If death should come, he hoped its messenger would be a swift knife. The medicine men were behind him; it would be by their hands that the blow would be struck.

Shikellamy was the first to speak. Upon his magnificent body the firelight danced. His immobile face told nothing of his heart, but it seemed to Conrad that his voice was kind.

"We have listened to the story of our brother Quagnant," said he. "We believe that you are honest and true. We believe that you speak our words. In order that we may bind ourselves to you and you to us" — now Conrad's heart stood still — "in order that we may bind ourselves to you and you to us, we make you a member of the Five Nations. We give you our heart and you give us your heart. He who is our friend is your friend. He who is our enemy is your enemy. We invite you to the extended lodge, we bid you come to our feasts. We will give you in token deerskins to make you clothes and shoes."

Now there was a long pause. The rising wind moaned in the pine trees, the fire leaped. Shikellamy crossed to the council fire and held out his great hand.

"We give you also in token a new name.

'Eyes-like-the-Sky' you are to the children, but among men you are, 'He-holds-our-fate.'"

Now the King of Rivers came forward. A true Indian, he gave no sign that he recollected the camp of Blackheath and the strange encounter which reached now its stranger consummation.

"We are to see dark sights," said he. "I see wars, with Indians creeping upon pale-faces and pale-faces upon Indians. I hear cries to the Great Spirit. See that you, who are now our Tongue, are true to us. Then the English will conquer the French and the land will have peace. Between the Indian and the English is a bond. You are that bond."

Now Shikellamy spoke again.

"You will have a great name while you live, and after you die your Indian brothers will visit the place where you lie. Your children will say with pride, 'I am of the great He-holds-our-fate, his blood is mine, I have his brave heart.' Will you be true to your brothers?"

"I will be true to my brothers."

Then, at the side of a beckoning Quagnant, Conrad sat down.

"You have done well," said Quagnant. "Now the feast begins."

Conrad made no answer. He saw the Long House, enormous, mysterious; he saw the little fringe of white faces between it and the sea. He saw the hopes and fears of the dwellers in the Long House and the hopes and fears of the strangers. Both were in his own heart.

In June, John Conrad's eager, anxious eyes were satisfied. He still walked each evening into the forest. There on a fallen tree he sat and looked toward the west. One clear evening, he saw coming toward him an erect, alert young Indian and sprang up to make the same eager inquiry with which he greeted all Indians. Then he stood still. The Indian was clad in doeskin, his hair was long, his feet were moccasined — but his eyes were blue!

"My son!" cried John Conrad.

Hand in hand the two sat down on the fallen tree.

"How are my brothers and sisters?" asked Conrad.

"I have heard no ill news of them. Sabina is married, and Barbara has taken her place with a kind mistress in Schenectady. Of all my dear children you are left me, Conrad. What has befallen you?"

Conrad talked steadily and quietly. He was different; his eyes were steady, his figure erect, his voice deep. He told of the strange life, of the harsh training, of the bitter suffering from hunger and cold.

When he described the council, John Conrad shivered.

"A thousand times I wished I had not let you go!" Then in the gathering dusk his eyes sought his son's face. "What are you going to do now, Conrad?"

Conrad turned and smiled into the anxious eyes.

"I am going to help you and I am going to teach the children their letters. Father," — Conrad looked back into the darkening woods, — "the life among the Indians seems already like a dream; but there they are waiting, a

fearful menace to us all. Suppose that I should some day be the one to keep the peace! Perhaps God has saved me for that through much danger and perversity."

John Conrad breathed a long sigh. He did not look into the future, but into the past.

"Your mother and I could not give our children riches and honor," said he slowly. "We tried to give them faith in God and willingness to do their simple duty. If you have learned those lessons from us or in the forest among the Indians, you are at last a man. Your mother —"

But John Conrad could not finish, needed not to finish. The hand within his tightened and an arm was thrown across his bent shoulders. Together the two sat silently, as they had stood long ago in Gross Anspach in the moonlight by the little church. Their thoughts traveled together from sister to sister and brother to brother, and finally back once more across the sea. Then, at last, John Conrad spoke.

"It has been a long journey and a weary

one," said he, "but my children will have a better chance than I in the world. There may be other journeys before me, but to-night my heart is at rest."

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